

the town crier

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Ellis, Kansas



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The Public Works Department will return to 8am to 5pm work hours on September 3, 2024.



Hoping for the Best, Preparing for the Worst

Submitted by Avery Smith, Chief of Police

Active Shooters: the worst possible incident that can happen in our great nation. Law Enforcement agencies across our country prepare for these situations and the Ellis Police Department is no different. In August, the Ellis Police Department hosted active shooter training at the Old Ellis High School campus, located in the 400 block of West 11th St.

Attending this training were several area Law Enforcement agencies: the Ellis County Sheriff's Office, WaKeeney Police Department, Trego County Sheriff's Office, and the Kansas Dept. of Wildlife and Parks. Officers received training on moving towards and through an active scene, establishing a clear chain of command, requesting additional resources, and neutralizing the threat that is present on scene. Officers also received some medical training that covered treating injuries to victims on scene, as well as themselves. Solo, duo, and team response scenarios were also covered.

It is very important to us as a community that we take these situations very seriously and report suspicious activity or strange circumstances. If something seems off or doesn't feel right, report it, even if you think it's nothing. The Ellis Police Department takes very seriously the moral duty to protect the innocent from harm. We hope that tragedy never strikes in our little town, but we stand by, ready to act if called upon for these situations.



Lead and Copper Survey

Submitted by John Leiker, Public Works Director

The City of Ellis is still in the process of collecting all the Lead and Copper Pipe Surveys that were sent out with utility bills in the last year. We wish to thank the several hundred people who have returned their survey back to the City.

For those who have not returned their survey, in the next few weeks, the Public Works department will be going door-to-door to help the owner, renter or business complete the survey. We will also have to go door-to-door for those who returned their survey and were not able to identify what type of material their pipes are.

These surveys are mandatory from the State of Kansas and the EPA. They are to be filed with the State of Kansas by October 24, 2024, along with our proposed plan to start a lead service line replacement program. All lead lines are to be removed by 2034. This will be a very expensive undertaking.

The surveys are important in not only helping us determine which lines will be replaced, but when completed, should help us with State and Federal grants to help pay for it. Your cooperation in this endeavor is very much appreciated!

We will be **CLOSED** Monday, September 2nd for





Utility Rate Changes (Comparison of Current to New)

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

One of the key considerations during the budget process is determining whether current utility rates can continue to cover the expenses required to maintain each utility. The City manages three main utility funds: water, sewer, and sanitation (trash).

According to State Statute, municipal utility funds must be self-sustaining, meaning that the revenue generated must

be sufficient to cover the expenses of each fund. In August 2016, the Council adopted Ordinance No. 1407, which provides for automatic 2% annual utility rate increases. This measure aims to address inflation gradually, reducing the need for larger, more sudden rate hikes. The percentage can be adjusted by Resolution if necessary.

During budget preparation each year, this Ordinance is reviewed to determine whether the 2% increase will be sufficient for the upcoming year. After analyzing the utility funds, the Council decided to move forward with the automatic 2% increase in water, sewer, and sanitation rates for the next budget. The new rates will take effect with the November 1, 2024 utility bills, covering usage from September 10th to October 10th.

	CURRENT	Starting with November 1, 2024 billing	
	4,000	4,000	Gallons of water billed (Sample Usage Only - Actual usage unique to each household)
	\$13.12	\$13.38	3/4" Meter Monthly Rate
	\$5.03	\$5.13	Water Usage Rate (per 1,000 gallons)
	\$0.032	\$0.032	State Water Fee Rate (per 1,000 gallons)
WT	\$33.23	\$33.90	Total Water Charge (monthly meter charge PLUS charge for water usage)
WF	\$0.13	\$0.13	State Water Fee
BD	\$26.13	\$26.13	Monthly Water Bond Payment Fee
SW	\$40.56	\$41.39	Monthly Sewer Charge
SN	\$29.27	\$29.86	Monthly Sanitation Charge
TR	\$9.37	\$9.56	Monthly ADDITIONAL Trash Cart Charge (i.e.—second trash cart)
GR	\$2.33	\$2.38	Monthly Grass Cart Charge (for EACH grass cart*)
	\$141.02	\$143.35	TOTAL RESIDENTIAL FAMILY UTILITY BILL

1.7% Increase in TOTAL utility bill *Grass carts are only billed May-November.



Every Vote Counts!

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

Registered voters will head to the polls to elect representatives for our local government on November 5th. This year, three City Council seats are up for election. The positions are currently held by Council members Jolene Niernberger, Martin LaBarge, and Kellie Crnkovich. Incumbents Jolene Niernberger and Martin LaBarge are running for re-election, joined by two additional candidates, Dava Gaschler and Trevor LaBarge, all vying for the three open seats.

Polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Ellis VFW, located at 813 Jefferson, next to City Hall. Make sure to get out and vote on November 5th to let your voice be heard!



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 SFHA, Flood Insurance is a good investment. 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.



Grant Funding Secured for Mural Project

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

In June, the Council received exciting news for the mural project! The Clerk's office applied for grants to help cover the project's \$20,000 total cost. Applications were submitted to the Office of Rural Prosperity Rural Mural & Public Art Grant Program and the Dane G. Hansen Foundation. The City of Ellis was awarded grants from both organizations, totaling \$16,500, which will go toward the project. The City will be responsible for the remaining \$3,500 balance.

Mindy Allen, the artist who recently painted the elevator in Inman, KS, is scheduled to complete the mural from late September to early October this year. We eagerly anticipate the new mural on the south side of the municipal building.



Community Clean-up SEPTEMBER 30th

Submitted by John Leiker, Public Works Director

- You must have items out before 8:00 a.m. on September 30 (but please do not begin making your pick-up piles before September 27th).
- Place items to be picked up where your normal trash is collected.
- All items should be placed approximately 3 feet away from all utilities.
- Separate your items by *type* (see categories below).
- We will be stopping at each residence for ONLY 15 minutes MAXIMUM
- We will NOT make any return trips.
- **To avoid wrongful pickup, please tag or remove your "treasures" from the collection area.**
- **Grass will NOT be picked up Monday, September 30th**

If you have any questions concerning the Clean-Up, call the Ellis Public Works Department at 785-726-4741 or 785-726-1741.



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.**



Last Grass Pickup

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

The **LAST GRASS PICKUP** of 2024 will be Monday, **October 28, 2024.**

After that date, the Sanitation Crew will **NOT** empty the green grass carts until next April. You may store the grass cart at your residence until the next mowing season.

If you are still mowing grass after October 28th, please place the **BAGGED** grass clippings in your trash cart or take them to the compost pile.

During the winter season, grass carts cannot be used as extra trash carts. If you have more trash than your regular cart can hold, please call 785-726-4812 to arrange a special trash pickup.

Municipal Waste	Metals (White Goods)
Fabrics Lamps Furniture Upholstery & Plastic Chairs Couches Carpet & Pad Foam Products	Washers Dryers Metal Buildings Metal Doors Piping Lawn Chairs Swing Sets Bicycles Open Barrels Tin Wagons Refrigerators (only remove if tagged) Lawn Mowers (with Gas & Oil removed) Metal Containers Bed Frames & Springs Lawn Equipment
Trees	Non-Collectable Items*
<p>NO LONGER THAN: 4' in length & 6" in diameter</p> <p>Place in alley—will be removed as soon as possible at a later date</p>	Explosives Tires Thinners Drain Openers Flammable Materials Asbestos Materials Concrete or Rocks Medical Waste (Needles, Syringes, etc.)
Construction & Demolition	<p>* E-Waste can be taken directly to the Ellis County Transfer Station.</p> <p>* Household Hazardous Waste Station is open Mon.-Fri. 8:00 am to 4:45 pm Sat. 9:00 am to 3:45 pm 785-628-9460</p>
Bricks & Masonry Materials Any Wood Products (including Pallets) Wallcoverings Drywall Electric Wiring Non-Asbestos Insulation Roofing Materials Plumbing Fixtures (Stools, Sinks, Tubs) Wire Fencing or Wire	



Campground Project Update

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

Construction for the campground improvements is set to begin within the next couple of months. With all parties having signed the awarded bid contracts, the project is moving forward.

The playground equipment has already been delivered. It is currently in storage, waiting for the construction company to finish the dirt work before installation can begin.

The pre-fabricated bathhouse is now in development at the manufacturer, with production expected to start soon. It will be an exciting milestone when the bathhouse is finally delivered and installed in its designated location.

Once completed, this project will be a fantastic addition to the campground, providing enjoyment for many generations to come!

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.



Understanding your Flood Risk (ASFPM Newsletter)

Submitted by Steve Homburg, Certified Floodplain Manager

Developed by ASFPM in 2022, with financial support from FEMA, this interactive website provides users with the information they need to understand and mitigate their flood risks. **Now with more than 45 flood mitigation strategies, [ReduceFloodRisk.org](https://www.reducefloodrisk.org) delivers detailed guidance, complete with photos, graphics, and links to additional resources, empowering individuals to make informed decisions.**

To get started, simply go to [ReduceFloodRisk.org](https://www.reducefloodrisk.org), answer a series of five quick questions, and receive a detailed list of mitigation options recommended to reduce flood risk for their specific property type. The curated results can then be filtered and sorted by key attributes, such as cost, complexity, and level of required maintenance, making it easy for people to find solutions that fit their needs and budgets. Additionally, the site offers helpful resources on flood insurance, financial assistance, and expert contacts, all available without needing to create an account.



Sewer Cleaning

Submitted by Verda Flinn, Assistant City Clerk

Recently, Mayer Specialists was in town cleaning a portion of our City sewer lines. We want to remind the community that certain items should never be flushed down the toilet, as they cannot be properly treated by the City's wastewater system. Flushing these items can cause them to clump together and block the sewers, leading to potential flooding in homes and yards. This not only causes significant inconvenience for families but also results in costly repairs for the City.

This is a growing issue in many cities, but you can help protect our community! Please **DO NOT** flush the following items: cleaning wipes, baby wipes, paper towels or feminine hygiene products. Even

wipes labeled as "flushable" should be disposed of in the trash can.

Let's work together to protect our sewer lines and wastewater treatment plant. The only things that should be flushed down the toilet are bodily fluids, fecal matter, and toilet paper. Everything else belongs in the trash!



Positivity in Our Community!

Submitted by David McDaniel, Mayor

What a Summer! As the kids head back to school, I reflect on all the positive things that have taken place in our city in the first seven months of this year.

The Ellis School Buildings have been transformed with much needed remodeling and upgrades that the district bond has provided.

Citywide concerns - Ellis is addressing the housing shortage by using the remaining TIF funds on the south hill area to get several street extensions and infrastructure in place. This will immediately provide 12 building lots available for new housing starts. More lots will be available later as the residential area grows to the south and east when funds are secured for expansion. The City is also aware of the water pressure issue in the south area of town and has contacted an engineer to investigate and provide a plan for a pressure booster station for that area.

NRP or Neighborhood Revitalization Plan was approved and is available to all Ellis citizens.

The downtown development group (Grow Ellis Downtown) is investigating ways and funding to improve our downtown district and attract businesses downtown.

The campground has been very busy this season. New facilities/improvements for the south side of the camping area include a second bathhouse and other improvements. Funds have been secured and construction should begin shortly with a spring date for final completion.

The city continues with the annual street maintenance program. Crack sealing and chip sealing are important to the preservation of the streets. The Council has recently set funds in the 2025 budget for the improvement of 2nd Street to enhance current and future business prospects in the northwest part of town. The council and staff are always aware and working to secure grants to help with street improvements and replacement. Street repairs in some areas will be dictated by the water and sewer issues under the driving lanes that need attention before replacing the street can be accomplished.

The Trego Waterline Project continues to move forward. Property owners in Trego and Ellis County are being contacted regarding the easements needed to continue the process. The Water Project will help blend water to improve the quantity and quality of water for Ellis citizens for many years to come.

Have you noticed that 3 new houses are under construction in town right now? Let's continue to progress in a positive manner.



HOLIDAY TRASH SCHEDULE



- Monday, September 2.....NO trash pickup on **LABOR DAY**
- Tuesday, September 3.....The Monday grass/trash and Tuesday trash routes will be run
- Monday, September 30.....The Monday grass route will not be ran due to the City Wide Cleanup
- Monday, November 11.....NO trash pickup on **VETERANS DAY**
- Tuesday, November 12.....The Monday and Tuesday trash routes will be run
- Wednesday, November 27 ...The Wednesday and Thursday trash routes will be run
- Thursday, November 28NO trash pickup on **THANKSGIVING DAY**
- Friday, November 29NO trash pickup on **Thanksgiving observation**
- Monday, December 2.....The Friday and Monday trash routes will be run

City code prohibits vegetation watering between the hours of Noon to 7:00 p.m. year round.

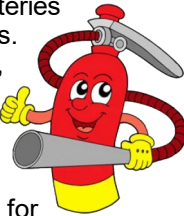


Preparing for Winter

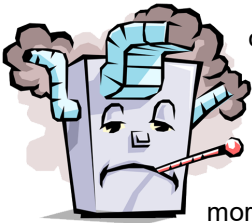
Submitted by Tim Kohlrus

As outdoor temperatures cool, it's only natural to warm things up inside. Before you flip the switch on the heater, take a minute to complete your fall safety checklist.

When you turn your clocks back, replace the batteries in all smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors. Make sure your fire extinguisher is fully charged, and within the expiration date. If you don't have a fire extinguisher, get one!



Make sure everyone knows where the fire extinguisher is stored and how to properly use it. Then, develop a fire safety plan and escape route for your family. Teach everyone how to stop, drop and roll.



Before it gets frigid, turn the heating unit on to ensure it is working properly. To reduce the risk of furnace fires, regularly replace furnace filters and keep all areas around the furnace and burner clean and unobstructed. Combustibles should be at least six-inches away from the vent pipe, and never close off more than 20% of heat registers.

If you have a fireplace, have a professional clean and inspect your chimney. Use a fireplace screen, guard, or glass doors to keep hot ash and sparks contained. Store extra wood, and other types of combustible materials, at least five feet away from your fireplace, and never leave a fire unattended. Burn seasoned hardwoods, such as oak, and keep fires small. When building a fire, strategically place logs on a metal grate at the back end of your fireplace using kindling to ignite the fire.



Clean your gutters, downspouts, and remove all leaves and debris from the perimeter of your space. Never park your vehicle over a pile of leaves. Heat emitted from your car can ignite the leaves, destroying your vehicle and all things around it. After every load of laundry, clean the dryer vent. On a regular basis, clean your toaster and/or toaster oven to remove crumbs and leftover food.

Most of these recommendations seem like common sense, right? But, the busier we get, the less fire safety in the forefront. When the clocks roll back this fall, take time to prepare your home or business for a fire-safe fall and winter season.



When Do I Call 911?

Submitted by Avery Smith, Chief of Police

"When do I call 911? I'm not sure if this is an emergency."

If you are unsure if you are reporting an emergency, it is best to call 911. Examples of emergency situations are as follows:

- ★ You have been the victim of a crime
- ★ You have witnessed a crime
- ★ You have either witnessed or been involved in a traffic accident
- ★ You or your neighbor's house is on fire
- ★ You or someone else is currently experiencing a medical issue, and you need emergency medical services
- ★ Your child has gone missing



Examples of situations that require police response and aren't considered emergencies that should be reported to the non-emergency line are as follows:

- ★ There is a dog running at large that is not being aggressive
- ★ You have questions about city ordinances
- ★ You need to request a welfare check on someone that didn't show up to work today
- ★ Employment requires you to be fingerprinted
- ★ You would like to request a civil standby

These are just a few of examples of situations that should be reported to the non-emergency line at **(785) 625-1011**.

No matter which reporting method you choose, a dispatcher will answer the phone. They will begin gathering relevant information from you and get the call for service dispatched appropriately. The biggest help that you can give them is to answer their questions completely and calmly. Our dispatchers are trained in Emergency Medical Dispatch (EMD). They may give you instructions on performing CPR, and will coach you through performing CPR, should the situation require it. The moment all required information is gathered, the call for service is sent to Law Enforcement, EMS, or Firefighters; who will then respond to the scene.



ELLIS RECYCLING CENTER

▶▶▶ HOURS ◀◀◀

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

8:30 to 11:30 AM



Wednesday - 3:00 to 7:00 PM



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.



Final Lap

Submitted by Verda Flinn,
Assistant City Clerk

We hope everyone had a great time during this past pool season! A big thank you to our pool staff for ensuring a fun and safe summer: Manager Ashley Kauten, Head Lifeguards Ava Reed and Jady Starns, and Lifeguards Braelyn Born, Grace Brull, Toby Honas, Chance Jimenez, Leah Reed, Mason Rohleder, Logan Russell, Taylor Seibel, Taegan Shannon, Maleah Vine, Mason Younger, along with Pool House Attendants Alyssa Rome and Payten Burd.

We also want to acknowledge our five Water Safety Instructors - Grace Brull, Toby Honas, Ava Reed, Mason Rohleder, and Maleah Vine - who led two sessions of Red Cross swimming lessons and offered private lessons both before and after regular pool hours. This season, the staff provided more private swim lessons than they did in 2023, helping to ensure that our youth have the skills they need to stay safe in the water.

Unfortunately, Mother Nature forced the pool to remain closed for three days this season. The storms and cooler weather affected our 2024 pool attendance, with 2,859 patrons visiting, down from 3,487 last year. On a brighter note, water aerobics saw a surge in popularity, drawing 192 participants compared to 117 last year. We also hosted 7 pool parties!

Thank you all for making 2024 another successful year!

We can't wait to see you next summer!



Scam Awareness

Submitted by Avery Smith, Chief of Police

Every year, the Ellis Police Department takes numerous calls of our community members being scammed. In most instances, scammers tell our community members that they have won an exorbitant amount of money or that they have warrants for their arrest. Remember, if it plays to your emotions or sounds too good to be true, it is. In some instances, scammers try to gain access to your personal information via hacking your accounts.

Here are some steps that you can take to protect your personal information and your accounts:

1. Use **STRONG** passwords that don't consist of things like your pet's name or your date of birth.
2. Change your passwords frequently, or set up two-factor authentication (2FA) on your accounts. Most social media accounts offer 2FA.
3. Never store your personal information in a place where it can easily be found.
4. Set up a recovery email that is linked with your accounts, so that you can use that email to recover an account that was hacked or stolen from you.

Another common scheme is through text messages. A phone number or email address will text your phone informing you that a package that was scheduled for delivery was stopped due to an issue with either your payment information or your Amazon account. Another common text that goes out requests the community member pay an invoice for an anti-virus software that they didn't purchase. The text message will ask you to follow a link to clear up the issue. Following that link can potentially leak your personal information to the scammer that sent you the message.



The most recent scam that has hit our area is called a "Brushing Scam." To read more information on this scam, you can visit the United States' Postal Service Inspector website at:

<https://www.uspis.gov/news/scam-article/brushing-scam>

If you receive scam calls or strange text messages, the easiest way to get them to stop is to not reply. Most modern phones also have the ability to have calls from numbers not in your contacts list sent straight to voicemail. If you receive a large number of scam calls, consider enabling this feature to alleviate some of the headache that comes with scammers trying to get your information. If you have any questions about suspicious calls or texts you have received, please contact Ellis County Communications via the non-emergency number at (785) 625-1011 and ask to speak to an Ellis Police Officer about the suspicious activity. You will be transferred to an officer who can take a look at the calls or messages for you and advise you if you are being scammed.



calendar



SEPTEMBER

2	LABOR DAY <i>City offices closed</i>
3	Public Works resumes 8-5 work hours RNR & Budget Hearings 6:00 pm City Council 6:30 pm
6	Municipal Court 8:00 am
16	City Council 6:30 pm
20	Municipal Court 8:00 am
23	Planning Comm 7:00 pm
30	CITY-WIDE CLEANUP

OCTOBER

4	Municipal Court 8:00 am
7	City Council 6:30 pm
15	Voter Registration Books closed until after election
18	Municipal Court 8:00 am
21	City Council 6:30 pm
28	Planning Comm 7:00 pm
	Last Grass Pickup
31	HALLOWEEN

NOVEMBER

1	Municipal Court 8:00 am
3	Daylight Saving Time Ends
4	City Council 6:30 pm
5	ELECTION DAY City-State-National offices
6	Voter Registration Books Re-open
11	VETERANS DAY <i>City offices closed</i>
15	Municipal Court 8:00 am
18	City Council 6:30 pm
25	Planning Comm 7:00 pm
28	THANKSGIVING <i>City offices closed</i>
29	Thanksgiving Holiday <i>City offices closed</i>



CANDIDATE COMMENTS

At the beginning of August the candidates who filed for a position on the Governing Body were asked the following questions:

- ▶ *What position are you running for?*
- ▶ *What do you think are your qualifications for this position?*
- ▶ *What do you think are the most important issues facing the City during the next two years, and how should they be dealt with?*

The following responses have been printed exactly as the candidate submitted.

What position are you running for?

I am Jolene Niernberger, candidate for a position on the Ellis City Council. I currently serve on the Council, the Planning Commission and Board of Zoning Appeals, Housing Authority, Ellis Alliance, Senior Advisory Committee and the Kansas Community Empowerment Program (Ellis PRIDE).

Jolene Niernberger

What do you think are your qualifications for this position?

My qualifications include my experience as a Council representative, my background in grant management and community outreach, and my commitment to service. I attend League of Kansas Municipalities (LKM)-sponsored conferences, have taken Leadership Academy training seminars and served on the LKM Finance and Taxation Policy Committee.

What do you think are the most important issues facing the City during the next two years, and how should they be dealt with?

An adequate water supply is critical for our survival and growth. Our water expansion plan is progressing. We have secured water rights that assure our access to an adequate supply of quality water for our citizens. We continue to meet our fiscal obligations and requirements to ensure our utilities (water, wastewater and sanitation operations) remain in compliance with federal and state mandates, enabling us to provide efficient, cost-effective services.

We adhere to our comprehensive plan for street maintenance. I support continued investments to annually replace, improve and maintain our city's street, water and sewer infrastructure.

The role of government is to deliver basic services: ensure public safety, provide for the health and welfare of our citizens, economic development and contribute to quality of life projects. To continue to provide these basic services we must increase our tax base with commercial and residential development. An expanded tax base is also necessary to support our schools, maintain our parks, continue the campground expansion project, and support our recreational programs.

Ellis is a safe, clean community. We benefit from the professionalism, experience, knowledge and abilities of our city employees and our volunteer fire department who dedicate their time to community service. Supporting our experienced workforce is cost-effective, saving in future hiring and training costs.

Essential to good government is an informed public who have positive, supportive recommendations for city planning. I welcome citizen input on city issues and concerns, and will continue to make decisions that I believe are in the best interests of all our citizens.

What position are you running for?

I am running for City Council.

Trevor LaBarge

What do you think are your qualifications for this position?

I've been an Ellis native my whole life. I strive to find better for the community which tends to lead me doing community service and volunteer work. I have experience in community engagement, skills in problem solving and collaboration. As well as demonstrate a commitment to transparency and accountability. It brings me great pride to have an opportunity to serve my community.

What do you think are the most important issues facing the City during the next two years, and how should they be dealt with?

The most important issues I believe the city would be facing are the following:

- a) Public Safety - Balancing public safety with community trust is essential. Cities should focus on community policing initiatives, investing in social programs that address root causes of crime, and fostering dialogue between law enforcement and residents.
- b) Street Maintenance and Repairs - Maintaining and providing the best and safest roads for the community. Plan of action needs to be established and stuck to in order for this to be done, City of Ellis has the people and or the equipment to get it done.
- c) Empowerment and Ownership - Community contribution towards decision-making process, working towards a sense of ownership over the cities projects, Empowerment behind it fosters their pride with a greater commitment to the success of it, as they see it as a reflection of our city's culture and future.

To effectively deal with these issues, city leaders and council members should engage with the community and gather input from residents, and collaborate creating comprehensive, long term plans that are flexible enough to adapt to changing circumstances will be key to making meaningful progress.



CANDIDATE COMMENTS continued

What position are you running for?

I am running for a seat on the City Council

Dava Gaschler

What do you think are your qualifications for this position?

I believe my qualifications include being a property owner in Ellis. I was born and raised here. After high school I lived in Wichita for a number of years. However, Ellis was always home! Living in the city and moving back to Ellis gives me a greater appreciation and different perspective for our wonderful town. I am very involved with our community and plan to be a lifelong community member.

What do you think are the most important issues facing the City during the next two years, and how should they be dealt with?

Affordable housing needs addressed. We can't grow our town and our schools without places for young families to live.

I would also like to be a voice for our community on the City Council. Transparency in our local government is important to me. I'm a true believer that "it takes a village" and just not a few people!

What position are you running for?

My name is Martin LaBarge and I am running for the position of Ellis City Council.

Martin LaBarge

What do you think are your qualifications for this position?

As a current City Council member my position is to serve the citizen's of Ellis by answering their questions and addressing their concern's to the Council and dept. heads. Also to work with the Mayor, Council, City Administrator, along with the dept. heads to help form and prepare the City budget, to help plan projects, and to address the needs of the community.

What do you think are the most important issues facing the City during the next two years, and how should they be dealt with?

The City of Ellis infrastructure has always been the most important to me. Within the City infrastructure is water, streets, and sewer. We are currently in the process of bringing the Trego water line project to the City of Ellis to tie end to the water treatment plant. This is to ensure not only future water supply but also improve the quality of our water by blending it with our current water wells at the water treatment plant. Another project that is planned is a pressure station on the south part of Ellis and that is to improve the water pressure for the existing and future homes to be developed. Our streets, we have plans to replace 2nd St from Washington St. west to Dorrance St. This is to accomidate the truck route traffic for the commercial businesses there now and for future commercial development in the future. Then for 6th St. the Monroe intersection and approximately 70 ft. to the west. 6th St. is also a high traffic street, along with a school and church there, and also with our continued maintance on the rest of our streets to repair and patch when water leaks occur, break out, also sealing cracks along with street sealing in different sections of town.

And the sewer plant, this includes the lift stations, and sewer lines. They also under go general maintenance and repairs to keep the sewer system running properly.



2025 Budget Preparation

Submitted by Amy Burton, City Clerk

Normally, at the time of the September newsletter, I have a report on the approved budget for the next year. This year, however, is not the case. Budget preparation for the 2025 budget was quite different than years' past.

For one, the City's assessed valuation increased almost \$3 million dollars due to the expiration of the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district. The City will make the final payment on the TIF bonds in October 2024.

Also, back in 2016 the City refinanced the 2006 Revenue and General Obligation bonds for the Water Treatment Plant. The bonds will be paid off two years early with the final bond payment in October 2024 as well. With the payoff of that debt, the "bond fee" on the utility bills will no longer be assessed. However, before everyone gets too excited, a bond fee will once again be assessed when payments for the Trego well project start. Construction hasn't even started on that project so we don't anticipate the bond fee to return until at least mid to late 2025. At this time, the amount of the returning bond fee is unknown. The fee is dependent on the actual cost of the project and how much the City will have to finance after applying designated cash reserves.

Another consideration for the 2025 budget is that the Campground Improvement Project should be completed next year. That project adds an additional bathhouse and new playground equipment on the south side of the campground. The City received a Community Development Block Grant to help pay a portion of the project.

The City will hold its Revenue Neutral Rate and Budget Hearings on September 3rd at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers at City Hall. I will have a full update for the December newsletter regarding the 2025 budget.