

OAK HILL

MAY 2014 www.oakhilltn.us NEWS



Thank You to All Residents Who Attended Oak Hill 2020 Neighborhood Meetings

In February, the City hosted four Oak Hill 2020 Neighborhood Meetings, which were very productive in sharing information and gaining the input of residents about the future of our City. Thank you to all residents who participated in these meetings!

During the meetings, we shared that the State of the City is strong and that our financial reserves remain healthy, and we also discussed the work that has been done to reduce expenses and increase revenues without significantly impacting residents.

We also shared some threats on the horizon, and how the long-term financial

trend for the City is declining as we wrestle in large part with the loss of interest income from City investments which has fallen 87 percent in recent years due to persistently low interest rates. Also contributing to this trend are long-term infrastructure expenses that must be considered.

In the longer-term, an even bigger challenge – one facing most cities in Tennessee – will come from the likely loss of revenue from the Hall Income Tax. This is the state tax on dividends and interest that leaders in the legislature predict will gradually be eliminated over the next few years.

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The mission of the City of Oak Hill is to preserve its natural resources and residential environment; to offer an enhanced level of services to its citizens; and to provide a strong sense of community pride with historical awareness all within close proximity to a world-class metropolitan area.

ELECTION DAY IS JUNE 10, 2014 • 7 A.M. TO 7 P.M.

Location: Brentwood Hills Church of Christ

EARLY VOTING BEGINS MAY 21 THROUGH JUNE 5

Location: Election Commission Satellite Office, 800 2nd Avenue S. (4th Floor)

Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

VOTE ★ VOTE ★ VOTE ★ VOTE

Mayor

Austin McMullen 579-6593

Vice Mayor

Jennifer Claxton 504-6163

Commissioner

Kyle Felts 760-5406

Planning Commission

371-8291

John Gillespie, Chair

Wade Hill, Vice Chair

& Secretary

Michael Baron

Bill Cary

Vice Mayor Jennifer Claxton

Judy Hoover

Mayor Austin McMullen

Lance Brock

Julia Wesley

Board of Zoning Appeals

371-8291

Lance Iverson, Chair

Graham Baker, Vice-Chair

Tom Fielder

City Judge

Tom Lawless

City Manager

Kevin Helms 371-8291

Assistant City Manager

M.C. Sparks 371-8291

Administrative Assistant

Victoria Talbott 371-8291

City Attorney

J. Todd Moore 290-5355

City Engineer

Kimley-Horn & Assoc. 371-8291

Building Official

Bill Burdette 371-8291

Safety Coordinator

Tommy Campsey 557-7329

Meeting Dates

All meetings will be held at

the City Office at 5 p.m.

5548 Franklin Pike Suite 102

Board of Commissioners Meeting

Third Thursday

Planning Commission Meeting

Fourth Tuesday

Board of Zoning Appeals Meeting

Third Tuesday

City Office

5548 Franklin Pike Suite 101

Phone: 371-8291

Fax: 855-611-8980

Hours: Monday-Friday

8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

After-Hours Emergency

557-7672 509-4812

www.oakhilltn.us

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City Completes Important Special Census With Help of Oak Hill Residents



FROM THE CITY MANAGER

Kevin Helms

Kevin.Helms@oakhilltn.us

I would like to begin this article by saying THANK YOU to the many residents who participated in the recent special census. We submitted our count for verification at the deadline with only 33 missing residences out of the roughly 1,850 homes in Oak Hill. The count has since been verified by the South Central Tennessee Development District and is currently awaiting certification by the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development.

Through the special census, we were able to count 4,689 residents in Oak Hill. Although we were unable to count each and every resident, we are tremendously proud of the special census results.

While I know many residents grew tired of the constant reminders, the special census was an important project for the City. We are appreciative of your patience and understanding. The City chose to conduct a special census because we believed our population exceeded the population recorded by the latest federal census. However, unlike many communities that have experienced a tremendous amount of growth due to significant construction, very little construction has occurred in Oak Hill since 2000. There-

fore, while we expected the population to grow, we understood it would not increase by a large percentage. In addition, the next federal census will not be conducted until 2020 and the results of this census are not likely to be adopted by the state for funding until 2023.

Through the special census, we were able to count **4,689 residents** in Oak Hill. Although we were unable to count each and every resident, we are tremendously proud of the special census results. So you may be asking “why does any of this matter?”

While there are some intangible benefits, the primary reason we completed the special census is to collect our fair share of state funding. The largest portion of Oak Hill’s revenue comes from state shared taxes, and there is a direct correlation between state funding levels and population. Every city in the state receives funding dependent upon their population. This means for each person not counted as an Oak Hill resident, funding for the provision of services is routed to other Tennessee municipalities rather than our own. In the current fiscal year, we will receive approximately \$110 per resident. Based upon our latest population count from the special census, the City of Oak Hill will receive approximately \$120,000 in additional funding over the coming years.



Thank you to the Cub Scouts Troop 51 for leading the Pledge of Allegiance at the City of Oak Hill’s January Board of Commissioners meeting.

Oak Hill 2020 Meetings Helped Gain Neighborhood Perspective

Continued from page one



While no legislation was passed to repeal the Hall Tax during this year’s legislative session, we expect the Hall Tax to come up for debate again next year.

Since the Hall Tax currently represents 40 percent of the City of Oak Hill’s revenue, the potential loss of that income will put a further strain on the City’s long-term finances.

We conducted the Oak Hill 2020 Neighborhood Meetings to update you on these challenges and to also get your direct ideas and input on the options and priorities ahead.

The professionals of the Municipal Technical Advisory Service (MTAS), an agency of the University of Tennessee who advise cities across our state, helped moderate the Neighborhood Meetings and collected citizens’ input. MTAS then submitted a report to the City of Oak Hill containing all citizens’ input, suggestions and priorities.

As a result of the Oak Hill 2020 Neighborhood Meetings and the MTAS report, the City is currently working with the National Research Center to conduct a citizen survey to capture your feedback on the best options for the City’s future. Please be on the lookout for this survey in the coming months.

Recent Board of Commissioners Actions

To help keep our citizens informed about decisions being made by the Board of Commissioners, we will include in each newsletter a list that summarizes the various actions of the Board.

December 2013

1. Voted down Ordinance 13-16 on 2nd reading which would amend the zoning ordinance to permit residents at Old Hickory Boulevard and Franklin Road to propose a development for consideration by the City.

January 2014

1. Deferred consideration of Ordinance 13-17 which would amend regulations regarding commercial solicitors.
2. Deferred presentation/acceptance of the FY13 audit.
3. Deferred consideration of contract to conduct FY14 audit.

February 2014

1. Heard presentation of FY13 audit from auditor, John Poole.
2. Voted to accept FY13 audit as presented.
3. Approved the City Manager to issue a Request for Qualifications from firms interested in conducting the FY14 audit.
4. Instructed the City Manager to research options to conduct a citizen survey.
5. Approved Ordinance 13-17 on 2nd reading which strengthens regulations regarding commercial solicitors.

March 2014

1. Heard presentation from City Engineer, Zac Dufour, regarding the Otter Creek Road study.
2. Considered options for paving Glen Leven Drive in conjunction with Metro Sewer repairs, but deferred a decision on this matter pending additional information.
3. Heard from the City Engineer regarding road failures on Blevins Drive, but deferred a decision on this matter pending additional information.
4. Viewed a presentation and received a written report from MTAS summarizing the results of the Oak Hill 2020 meetings.
5. Approved the City Manager to negotiate a contract with National Research Center to conduct a citizen survey regarding the responses received from the Oak Hill 2020 meetings.

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Smaller Cities Luncheon

In January, the City of Oak Hill hosted a meeting of the smaller cities. During the meeting, City of Oak Hill leaders and representatives from the surrounding cities met with Representative Charles Sargent to discuss legislation affecting local governments, particularly the proposal to repeal the Hall Tax. We underscored the tough situation that smaller cities face should this revenue stream be eliminated.

Mayor McMullen Updates Residents on Hall Tax and Fiscal Options; Requests Input



FROM THE MAYOR
Austin McMullen
Austin.McMullen@oakhilltn.us

“Thank you!” Thank you for taking the time to read the *Oak Hill News*. The City of Oak Hill communicates with residents in many ways, including phone calls, e-mails, website, text alerts, Facebook and Twitter. However, the City counts on residents reading the *Oak Hill News*. I know your time is valuable, and I appreciate you spending a few minutes to read the important information in these pages.

Hall Tax Revenue

The Hall Tax is important to Oak Hill. It pays for about 40 percent of the services Oak Hill provides. For years, I have been in close contact with State leaders about the necessity of these revenues to our City. Other mayors have joined me in these discussions.

The legislature is under great pressure to eliminate the Hall Tax. Last year, our legislators made it clear that a phase-out of the Hall Tax would very likely begin soon. This led the Board to discuss revenue alternatives for the City. However, I also continued to remind legislators how important Hall Tax revenue is to Oak Hill, and some of you joined me in this effort in the legislature’s closing days.

This year the legislature considered a bill that would phase-out only the State’s portion of the Hall Tax. When an amendment was added that would also eliminate the local government portion of the Hall Tax, the sponsor withdrew the bill. As a result, the

Hall Tax phase-out will be delayed for at least another year. I am encouraged by the legislature’s support for communities like Oak Hill.

Fiscal Options

Over the past few months you may have heard talk about commercial development in Oak Hill. Rest assured: the Board is not considering any commercial development.

The City counts on residents reading the Oak Hill News. I know your time is valuable, and I appreciate you spending a few minutes to read the important information in these pages.

Oak Hill Commissioners must plan for the City’s future. We must address a problem before it becomes a crisis. Last year legislators told us a Hall Tax phase-out would begin soon, meaning the loss of 40 percent of City revenue. Meanwhile, extremely low interest rates had already eliminated 25 percent of City revenue. Proper long-term planning means discussing all options to deal with the potential loss of 65 percent of City revenues. Options discussed have included charging higher fees, eliminating City services (such as trash and recycling pick up and chipper service), in-

stituting an Oak Hill property tax or obtaining greater sales tax revenue through additional development at Old Hickory Boulevard and Franklin Road. I and the other Commissioners listened to residents’ concerns about these options. In December, we voted down an ordinance that would have permitted residents at the corner of Old Hickory Boulevard and Franklin Road to propose a development plan for consideration by the City.

The latest news concerning the Hall Tax helps to alleviate many of the more immediate concerns that led to the discussion of these alternatives.

Continued Expense Cutting

The Board has been very conscious about cutting City expenses. I have heard some confusion from residents about expenses, and I want to be sure everyone has accurate information.

Donations: In previous years, the City made donations to worthy local organizations that benefitted Oak Hill residents. Almost 90 percent of donation dollars went to Radnor Lake. With the financial concerns facing the City, *this Board completely eliminated all donations two years ago.*

Salaries: From 2008 to present, City salaries have grown less than 1.3 percent per year, which is less than the rate of inflation during the same period of time. In real dollar terms, Oak Hill is paying less in salaries than in 2008.

The Board’s goal has been to cut costs where possible without seriously impacting the level of resident services or the quality of life in Oak Hill. I plan to continue this work.

Your Input

I value your feedback on the City’s policies and operations. I hope you will take a moment to stop by the City offices on the morning of Thursday, May 22, between 7 a.m. and 9 a.m. to talk with me about any ideas you have for the City.

Test Your Knowledge

The City of Oak Hill continues this feature in the newsletter as a way to inform citizens about City government and services. Each newsletter will feature a quiz about a different aspect of the City. We hope you find this to be a fun way to learn more about living in Oak Hill.

City Court/Property Maintenance

- The City Judge’s compensation is set at:
 - \$500 per month
 - \$100 per hour
 - \$12,000 per year
 - \$0

True or False

- Both the City Judge and the Court Clerk must meet continuing education requirements each year.
- The height of grass may only reach 6 inches before being ordered to be cut down.
- When a structure or residence is condemned and to be demolished, the City bears the cost for the removal.
- A vehicle in a “state of disrepair” is not allowed to be stored in the open in the City; this would include a vehicle that is inoperable under its own power, and/or unregistered or unlicensed.
- A temporary storage unit may not be located in a yard for longer than 30 consecutive days.

- True – The City Judge is a volunteer and receives no compensation for his/her service.
- True – The requirements are set by the State of Tennessee.
- False – The height of vegetation or grass must not exceed 8 inches.
- False – The owner of the property where the structure is to be removed pays for the demolition, or the City will have the work done and place a lien on the property to recoup the costs.
- True – Other characteristics would include broken windows, or flat tires.
- True – This is from the date of delivery to the date of removal.

Candidates for Oak Hill Board of Commissioners

Although the names of Elizabeth Beavers and Chris Taylor will also appear on the June 10 ballot as candidates for the Board of Commissioners, both have publicly announced the suspension of their candidacies and have endorsed other candidates.



Ron Coles

“I will work to maintain quality of life and city services in Oak Hill. This can be accomplished through responsible financial management. I am 100% opposed to commercial development and see no need for any new taxes. We, as a city, just need to live within our means and operate without depleting the reserve fund. I feel that Oak Hill’s City Commissioners should be good stewards of the public trust, financially and environmentally.”

Ron and his wife Melinda have lived in Oak Hill for 29 years, have two grown children and five grandchildren. They enjoy the peaceful, friendly neighborhood atmosphere in Oak Hill. Ron is a Professional Engineer who has devoted his career to port and economic development projects, focusing on both business and technical issues.

He is a civil engineer (University of Memphis) with a master’s degree in engineering administration (University of Tennessee). Ron founded his company in 1990 and has held leadership positions in regional, national and international organizations

Ron’s experience in management, financial responsibility, and technical knowledge—combined with a love for the neighborhood and good common sense—will be used to benefit the citizens of Oak Hill.

For additional information about Ron Coles, please visit www.ElectRonColes.com.



Wade Hill

I’m Wade Hill, and I’m asking for your vote. My wife, Jennifer, and I are 22-year Oak Hill residents. We raised two daughters here and have two wonderful grandchildren.

The 2010 flood cut short my previous campaign for Oak Hill Commissioner. With my position in the Nashville Office of Emergency

Management, I cancelled that campaign to help people get back into their homes.

The values that motivated my 2010 campaign are the same today. I love Oak Hill and firmly believe we must Preserve Oak Hill by Getting Back to Basics. My Back to Basics approach will unify us by focusing on what we all love about our city.

Oak Hill can avoid commercial development and new property taxes with a Back to Basics budget, which I have the experience to deliver. As Acting Director of the Metro Codes Department I manage 85 employees and help balance a budget four times larger than Oak Hill’s. My Back to Basics budget will ensure basic services and preserve the city for future generations without commercial development or new taxes.

I am a University of Tennessee graduate, Bachelor of Architecture, and have been a licensed architect since 1979. I solve problems with an analytical, common sense approach. I bring 13 years of government management experience and extensive knowledge of building codes and zoning.

As Commissioner, I pledge to communicate with you and listen to your ideas for preserving this wonderful city. I urge you – go to the polls and please vote for Wade Hill.



Nicole Hobson

I am Nicole Hobson and I have lived in Oak Hill since 2003.

Many people have asked me for my platform/agenda...it’s simple, I believe that government is from the people to the leaders, not from the leaders to the people.

As the only candidate who lives, works, worships and volunteers in Oak Hill, I still don’t pretend to have all the answers, and I refuse to point blame on any previous administrations. Oak Hill is a small enough community that we need to unite, not divide.

I believe it is a Commissioner’s responsibility to gather information, educate the

citizens, and make choices based on the will of the majority.

I have read charters, ordinances, reports, budgets, and research articles. My management experience in advertising and non-profits, in addition to my research, confirms that Oak Hill will face a budget shortfall in the future. We need to replace/repair roads and culverts, and with the probable elimination of the Hall Tax, we will need to recoup almost 40% of our budget.

Our options include: cut services, enact limited commercial development, execute a property tax, or some combination of the three.

What is your choice?

Feel free to contact me at ElectNicole4OakHill@gmail.com



Heidi Campbell

Heidi loves living in Oak Hill with her husband, Andrew, and their two young children. Her family has lived in Oak Hill for 26 years and she hopes to preserve these beautiful wooded hills for future generations. She earned her MBA at Vanderbilt and owned and operated her own business.

Residential-only, responsible-spending, and open-communication are guiding principles Heidi will pursue as an Oak Hill City Commissioner. She brings two years of experience serving as a commissioner on St. Paul MN’s Planning Commission, and she knows first-hand what it means to work well with city personnel and to serve the community with integrity. She strongly opposes any taxation or commercial development in Oak Hill.

Heidi believes that Oak Hill should be a big, friendly neighborhood. She greatly values her recent collaboration with an amazing group of Oak Hill neighbors through saveoakhill.com to spread the word about stopping the proposed commercial development ordinance. If elected to the commission, she will work to ensure that Oak Hill remains a unique refuge in the midst of the unconstrained urban sprawl surrounding us.

She encourages you to visit ElectHeidi.com and to get in touch if you have any questions.

Residents Question How New Company Separates Trash and Recycling



The City of Oak Hill has received questions from many residents regarding the recycling program. In particular, most citizens say it is unclear how trash and recycling materials are kept separate

with the equipment used by CleanEarth.

CleanEarth’s collection program is similar to the previous company used by Oak Hill, EarthSavers. The primary difference between the two companies is the trucks used by each company. CleanEarth collects trash and recycling in a much smaller truck than the previous company. The use of smaller vehicles results in less property damage and greater handling capabilities by the collectors.

As you can see in the above photo, the bed of the truck is divided into two sections. The larger section is for general trash and the smaller section is for recyclable materials. After collection, these sections are emptied into two different trucks at the transfer site. When the large trucks are full, one truck empties its contents in the landfill, while the other truck disposes of recyclable materials at the recycling site.

Because both the City and the contractor incur less costs for every ton that is not emptied in the landfill, recycling is a much more cost-effective solution.

Total collections for the first quarter of this year are as follows:

Month	Tons of Waste	Tons of Recyclables	% Recycled
January	95.66	13.33	12.20
February	79.04	17.55	18.20
March	105.89	14.99	12.40
Average	93.53	15.30	14.30

We expect totals to vary slightly due to the number of service days in each month and the fact that materials collected from homes near the end of the month may not be dumped until after the first day of the following month.

Crime Stoppers Monthly Meeting

In March, roughly 25 concerned citizens met at the monthly gathering of the Southmeade Crime Stoppers group. Attendees included residents who were eager to get involved and learn more about making their neighborhoods safer for all residents.

Metro Police Sergeant Steve Linn and Oak Hill Safety Coordinator Tommy Campsey conducted the meeting and discussed tips to keep neighborhoods safer.

The City encourages residents interested in joining a neighborhood watch group to get involved with Crime Stoppers. If you are interested in joining the Southmeade Crime Stopper group, please contact William Goertel at 203-273-4433.

If you are interested in starting a Crime Stopper group in your area, please contact Metro Police Sergeant Steve Linn at 615-880-1760 or Safety Coordinator Tommy Campsey at 615-371-8291.



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SOLID WASTE SERVICES

Chipper Service

CleanEarth: 371-8291

Garbage/Recycling Pickup

CleanEarth: 371-8291

Snow and Ice

Management Service

Mid Tennessee Erosion Control:
371-8291

Public Street Repairs, Street Signage, and Drainage Maintenance

City Office: 371-8291

Dead Animal Removal

City Office: 371-8291

After Hours: 862-8971

Emergency: 911

Non-Emergency Fire: 327-1300

Non-Emergency Police: 862-8600

West Sector Patrol: 862-7747

Oak Hill Safety Coordinator:

557-7329

City Court Role is Vital to Enforcing Property Maintenance Codes

Historically, the City of Oak Hill has faced an uphill battle enforcing property maintenance codes. This all changed with the establishment of a City Court in 2013.

In years prior, the Metro government threatened to sue Oak Hill to stop the formation of a City Court. After working with Metro, the City established its own court.

The City Court benefits residents by bringing dangerous and improperly maintained structures and properties into compliance.

The most significant action taken by the court to date was a court order that resulted in the demolition of a dangerous structure on Lakemont Drive. The structure had been damaged during the 2010 flood and abandoned by the residents.



The Oak Hill City Court usually lasts less than one hour per month and all fines and court costs are paid directly to the City office. The judge receives no compensation for his service and no new employees were needed to maintain court records. In fact, the cost of operating the City Court is limited to providing the judge with annual training as required by the state.

Join the City of Oak Hill for "Muffins with the Mayor" Thursday, May 22, 7 to 9 a.m.

Mayor Austin McMullen and City officials will meet with residents about issues important to our community over muffins and coffee on May 22 from 7 to 9 a.m. During the informal event, residents will have a chance to visit one-on-one with the City of Oak Hill staff. "This is a great opportunity to receive feedback from residents, which enables us to better serve the Oak Hill community," said Mayor Austin McMullen.

WHERE: City Office • Suite 102 • 5548 Franklin Pike • WHEN: Thursday, May 22, 2014 • 7 a.m. to 9 a.m.