



# CITY OF OSAWATOMIE

MUNICIPAL NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2021 • ISSUE 1 • VOLUME 1

## DEAR OSAWATOMIE, BY MAYOR L. MARK GOVEA

I hope this letter finds you well. I know the last year was, and continues to be, troubling for so many, and it is my sincerest hope that we all find renewed hope in 2021. I'd like to take a moment to tell you about our plans for the coming year. With your help we hope to make our hometown an even more special place to live, work, and grow.

The Flint Hills Trail has finally come to Osawatomie, and our great "Walker Station" trailhead amenities will be completed and ready for full use this spring/summer. An information kiosk, restroom facilities, and other points of interest are on their way, just in time for another season of outdoor fun. We've all seen what the Katy Trail did for the communities along it, and now it's our turn. Let's run (or bike) with it!

This year will also see much needed repairs to our Wastewater Treatment Plant, which the City is funding through a combination of federal grants and loan programs. I'm also excited to see all the new housing improvements and construction. There is a sense of pride when you drive around town now. People have really stepped up and started taking care of their properties.

Before I go, I want to thank two people in particular: Tim Lang and Donna Koontz. Tim Lang and Lang Chevrolet for helping support this newsletter with some of his advertising dollars. Tim always works to make a difference in our community and we thank him for his support. And sometimes it only takes one person to create change. So thank you, Donna, for suggesting that we create this special insert to better reach those that aren't on the internet.

I have a feeling that 2021 will be a banner year for our community.



Doug Walker unveils the dedication banner for "Walker Station" at the Flint Hills Trail trailhead near 12th and South Streets in Osawatomie.

## WHAT'S INSIDE

A simple breakdown of the City's budget

Information on the change in trash and recycling billing

Community Spotlight: The Osawatomie PRIDE Group is back and better than ever

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## REMINDERS

**City Offices** and facilities will be closed until January 31st to prevent further spread of COVID-19 -- Please call or email to set up appointments for necessary business.

**City Council** meetings are held on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month. Agendas are available on our website ([www.osawatomieks.org](http://www.osawatomieks.org)) or by calling and stopping by City Hall!

**COVID-19 Safety Tip:** Have backup masks handy in your bag or car in case cold weather side effects (sniffles, sneezes, breath condensation, even sleet or snow) soak your mask quicker than anticipated. A soiled mask doesn't offer the same protection as a fresh one!

## TRASH TALK

As was announced in the fall of 2020, Osawatome residential customers will see a separate fee included on their Property Tax Bill for trash and recycling service from January through December of the following year. This guarantees that waste is regularly removed from all homes in the City of Osawatome. City Council approved allowing the refuse bill be collected through the annual property tax bill for all residential trash collection and recycling services. The service will also include a new 95-gallon cart for every residential property, which should have been delivered to your home in mid-December.

Every built residential lot was assessed this service charge. If you believe you were inaccurately assessed, such as if you own a vacant property (an empty lot) or a lot with a vacant structure (that will remain vacant throughout 2021), please contact City Hall for a special rebate form.

## LETTER FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

BY JUSTIN BURCHETT

As 2020 closes and we start 2021, USD 367 is looking forward to a new year. For the Osawatome School District, 2020 can best be described as a year of change. In almost every aspect of our operations, we have had change forced upon us. From transitioning to remote learning with a week's notice in March, to reimagining how our students eat their meals, to cleaning and cleaning and cleaning, 2020 has thrown challenge after challenge at us.

On a daily basis, we have had to adapt and overcome to meet these challenges. This would have been a daunting task if not for our staff, students, and families. Each of these groups have risen to the occasion and made 2020 the best educational year that was possible. Their willingness to accept change with a shrug of the shoulders and a "we've got this" attitude has allowed our students to stay in school, our activities to continue, and our community to feel whole. The district owes each of these groups a Trojan thank you for their flexibility and support throughout this year.

We are anxiously awaiting the time we can bring back our normal operations and leave the masks at home. While there are certain to still be challenging days ahead for the district, we are already looking forward to the 2021-2022 school year. The district has identified the need to increase the number and depth of interactions between the district and our community as our primary goal for 2021-2020.

COVID has forced us to draw back on these opportunities to have our families and community in our buildings, experiencing those shared student interactions that create a strong educational community, and we know that a healthy school systems needs these engagement opportunities.

So, as we look forward to a new year, USD 367 is planning for a return to normalcy this fall. We would love nothing more than a boring, ordinary August. An August that sees our students smiles again, an August that has full stadiums and gyms, and an August that brings our community together in celebration of our successes.

# BUDGET BRIEFING

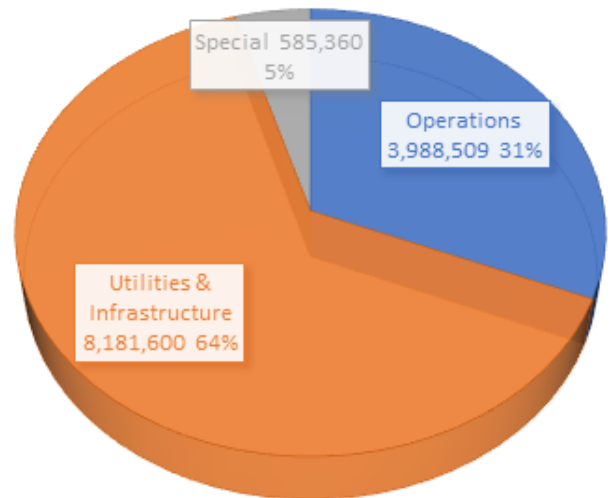
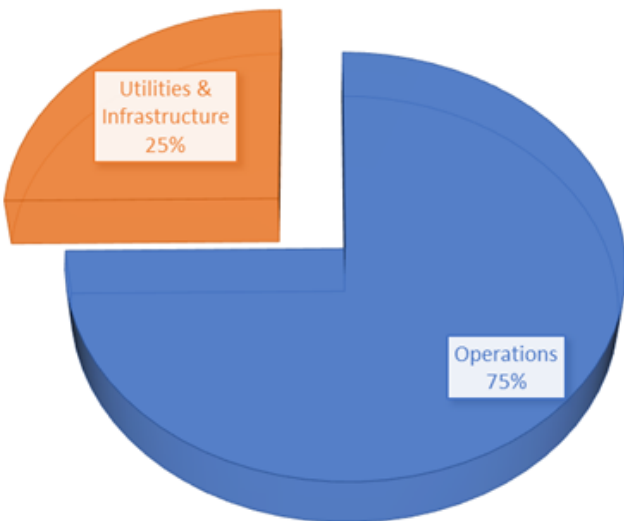
PRESENTED BY CITY MANAGER MIKE SCANLON

The City of Osawatomi's Budget can best be described by the way the dollars are used. Most of the money we use, about 64% of it, is spent on our Utilities and Infrastructure. The second largest use of our monies is in our Operations, where we use about 31% of the dollars we receive. Operations includes everything from Police and Fire services to Parks and Cemetery maintenance. Our largest operating department is the Police Department which spends about 33% of all our operating dollars. Our Special uses include the Library, Golf Course, Tourism, Industrial Development and Special Parks. Combined, our total annual budget is \$12,755,469.

We are often asked "Where do my Property Tax dollars go?" The following chart depicts the use of property tax dollars - about 75% of those Property Tax dollars goes to operations and the remaining 25% to Utilities and Infrastructure. It's important to note that the property tax dollars collected for operations don't even cover the cost of the Police Department. This means all other departments and a portion of the Police Department's budget has to be covered by other monies we collect (sales tax, charges for service, fees and fines).

WHERE DO PROPERTY TAX DOLLARS GO?

CITY OF OSAWATOMIE BUDGET BY USE



Now, this year we've done something a bit different with trash and recycling. This year we've put the cost of that service on the Tax Bill. There were three primary reasons for doing this:

1. To make sure that all residential properties that produce trash have trash service as required by local law.
2. To make sure that all residential properties pay for the service and don't simply use various business dumpsters and their neighbors' trash to get rid of their waste.
3. To make sure that there's never a lapse in service or loss of service because of turnover in tenants or ownership.

In just a few short weeks we've already seen a marked improvement in the amount of trash that was finding its way into local commercial dumpsters and nearby neighbor's trash.

# MEET YOUR NEIGHBOR(S) | Osawatomie PRIDE

President: Wes Duncan, Vice President: Kari Bradley, Secretary: Derek Hennes, Treasurer: Kayli Laughery



## In a nutshell, what inspired you to restart the PRIDE Committee?

**Wes Duncan:** I wanted to restart PRIDE because I wanted to see the community improve. I wanted an outlet for people who want to improve things that would accept anyone willing to help out the community. There are many people who want better things for Osawatomie, but they needed PRIDE to help get them going.

**Kayli Laughery:** I joined PRIDE to get more young people excited about the place they live and WANT to volunteer. We can complain about the status of things, or we can do something about it.

## What PRIDE project is the group most looking forward to in 2021?

**Derek Hennes:** I am most looking forward to continued work at the park with the flag pole and hopefully more work at the Soldiers Monument. Any of the historic landmarks pique my interest.

## Do you have a goal for PRIDE in 2021?

**Kari Bradley:** I love getting groups of people together and accomplishing something. We've already done so many different things with so many different people and I really want to build on that. Getting other groups and organizations involved is only going to skyrocket the progress that we are seeing. When groups of people work together there really is no limit on the work they can accomplish. Growing the size of our group is one of my biggest goals for 2021.

## How can people get involved in your organization?

To get involved with PRIDE, you can show up to any event. For more information feel free to contact any of the members and "Like" our FB Page to get updates. We want to include any person that is willing to help make Osawatomie a better place. Everyone has something different that they are able to give - labor, supplies, equipment, experience, time, support, etc. We need it all. We're working on some big plans for 2021 - stay tuned!

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