



CITY OF OSAWATOMIE

"Rural matters because people choose to live and love here. Rural matters because even if it's the middle of nowhere, it actually might be the middle of it all."

MUNICIPAL NEWSLETTER

JULY/AUGUST 2022 • ISSUE 3 • VOLUME 2

DEAR OSAWATOMIE,

BY MIKE SCANLON
CITY MANAGER

Just a year ago we announced the Paving The Way program and in the last ten months we've accomplished all the following:

- September/November 2021 - Increased property tax funding for the 2022 Budget, all dedicated to street repair, and presented the citizens with a Sales Tax question, which passed 64% to 36%
- December 2021 - Passed a Home Rule Ordinance that allowed us to issue debt payable from the property tax and sales tax that was passed
- February 2022 - Issued \$6,175,000 at an interest rate of 1.8122% with the majority of the debt dedicated to the Paving the Way program
- March 2022 - Settled and received debt proceeds
- April 2022 - Accepted bid for Brown Avenue from 16th to 18th Street
- May/June 2022 - Started utility relocations in preparation for construction
- July 2022 - Held a preconstruction meeting with anticipated mobilization in early August
- At the same time as all of the above we have been continuing other street work that you'll learn about later in this newsletter

People have asked me several times now, *why does it take so long to get working on the streets?* Well the answer is simple. **We want to do it right.** You can't skip steps.

First you seek permission from the citizens (voters) to raise money to fix the streets. After getting that permission, you issue debt so that you can pay the contractor and fund the improvements over time. Then you start prep work (utilities) so you can build a project. Only after you've finished the first three steps can you actually get to construction. **We are right on schedule.**

Like the tortoise and the hare, it's not the swiftest that gets the best streets built - **it's the one that takes their time and does it right.** We will forever be tortoises because it's important we do it right the first time.



Members of professional muralist team **Brickmob** work on the initial application of a large-scale mural in downtown Osawatomie. The mural was awarded as part of the State of Kansas' Office of Rural Prosperity "Rural Mural" program.

WHAT'S INSIDE

Welcoming Electric Vehicles to Rural Kansas

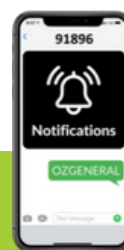
Budget 2023: What Makes a Municipal Budget?

Community Spotlight: Michele Silsbee - Director of Public Works

CITY HALL | 439 MAIN STREET | 913-755-2146

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REMINDER: ROAD WORK AHEAD

At the April 14th, 2022, regular meeting of City Council, the Governing Body awarded the construction contract for Brown Avenue from 16th Street to 18th Street to low-bidder Killough Construction (Ottawa, KS) for \$730,396.00.

While the contractor finishes work in another municipality, City crews completed necessary utility relocation in the project area and is readying for the official groundbreaking.

The following table of tasks is the work plan for the remainder of tasks related to Brown Avenue's repair plan.

Project Task List	Estimated Completion Date
Notice to Proceed	June 2022 (Done)
Construction Begins	July/August 2022
Construction Completion	August/September 2022

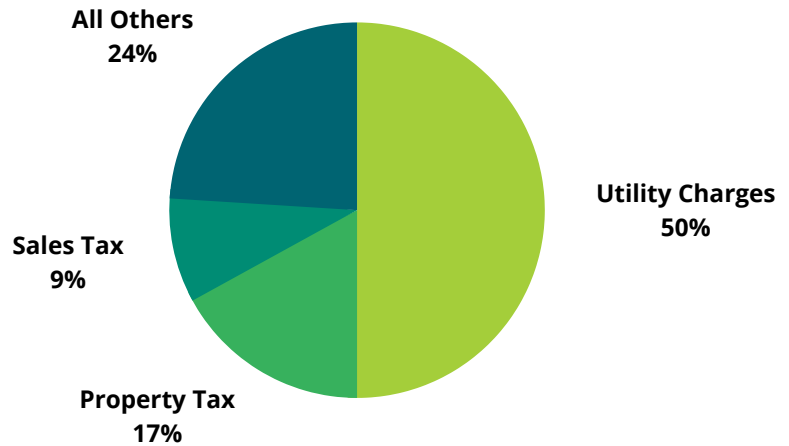
City staff is continuing design work for the other streets slated for 2022 repair or replacement: Main Street Terrace from 18th Street to 16th Street, Walnut Avenue from 6th Street to 4th Street, and 18th Street from Main Street to Brown Avenue. Street work will continue into the fall and winter so long as temperatures stay at or above 45 degrees.

Simultaneously, staff is designing the full replacement of 6th Street to be started in 2023; submitting multiple grant applications for streets, sidewalks and trails; working with the County on their overlay project and expanding it into the City on the South side of 6th Street; coordinating an overlay and sealing program that will start later in the summer; and fine-tuning the next set of road projects that have to be engineered and bidding let over the next 24-36 months.

For more information on Paving the Way, visit us online.

MUNICIPAL BUDGET 2023

One of the challenging issues we face in local government is taking the numbers that build our budget and turning them into something that is meaningful to our residents. For our community, our city is more of a Utility than a Local Government. Over fifty percent of our budget, when including transfers, is made up of water, wastewater, solid waste and electric charges. Another quarter of our budget is property tax and sales tax that primarily goes to fund our operations and debt.



In 2022 and 2023 we are operating under new state budget laws that require us to send out letters if we are going to exceed the Revenue Neutral Rate (RNR) for the coming year. We have presented a budget that will exceed the RNR for the coming year, so every property owner in the City of Osawatomeie will be receiving one of these letters. **What is the RNR for the City of Osawatomeie?** In Osawatomeie, the RNR is 66.277 mills and that number is provided to us by the Miami County Clerk. **What is a mill?** It's 1/1000 of a dollar or 1/10 of a cent.

The RNR was calculated and based on the increased value of our real property throughout all of the City. The rate we used for the 2022 Budget was approximately 80.000 mills and, because of increases in valuation, if we wanted to collect the exact same amount of money in 2023 as we did in 2022 it would be 66.277 mills. That makes our RNR 66.277. It can be confusing, but the important thing to remember is that as values go up, you need to levy fewer mills to collect the same amount of money. That's where we get the term "Revenue Neutral Rate." It's important to understand that not every property increases or decreases in value by the same amount.

(continued on next page)

ELECTRIC VEHICLES & RURAL KANSAS

On November 8, 2021, the City of Osawatome was in a consortium of eight businesses and municipalities, working through the Metropolitan Energy Center, that were awarded \$5.2 million through the U.S. Department of Energy's Low Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Vehicle Technologies Research, Development, Demonstration and Deployment program for electric vehicle (EV) and charging station projects.

These businesses and municipalities operate within environmental justice areas, opportunity zones, and other underserved areas. In addition to sedans, they are replacing small and heavy trucks with electric models. These partners will also be building out EV charging stations in various locations.

Here in the City of Osawatome, we will be engaging the community in developing goals for sustainability and economic vitality. Mike Scanlon, City Manager, stated when reflecting on the award, "It's nice to be at the front-end of rural economic development when it comes to EV chargers and vehicles. With the recent announcement of the Panasonic Battery Plant in De Soto, I believe as a community we are perfectly placed to leverage the benefits of these new technologies. I believe we can become a national leader in rural sustainability - the field is ours to grab."

As we embark on the journey, here are some important dates to put on your calendar:

- A public comment period is **open now** for our PSP grant application that highlights the integration of EV into parts of our downtown
- August 8, 2022 - our new website will debut with a special section on this EV grant through the Metropolitan Energy Center
- August 11, 2022 - we will announce ribbon cuttings for our first set of charger locations
- September 12, 2022 - the Hub Planning Office opens (stay tuned for location)
- September/October 2022 - (EV Plans / Solar Array / Sustainability) Weekly Q&A and Community Outreach
- October 3, 2022 - final announcement and planned construction dates for the Evergy/Osawatome solar array
- November 2022 - we hope to host the final round of competition for the USD #367 Solar Array/EV Charging Station drawing contest

BUDGET (continued)

Every property is treated in a unique manner to arrive at its appraised value. Additionally it's not the City that sets the value of your home or business property- that work is done by the County Appraiser.

So why is the City of Osawatome proposing to exceed the RNR? Our four primary reasons include:

1. **Health Insurance** - Even as we push the burden of this benefit to the employee our portion has increased 50-60% over the last three years. There is no cost containment for small employer health insurance programs.
2. **Transferring Police Officers to Kansas Police and Fire (KP&F) from Kansas Public Employee Retirement System (KPERs)** - We are having a hard time recruiting and retaining police officers because we are one of just a handful of agencies in the area that are KPERs. All of the police agencies in Miami, Johnson, Miami, Leavenworth, Douglas, Wyandotte and Atchison counties are members of KP&F. We are at a competitive disadvantage - meaning we are paying more to recruit and train and, in just a few years, we lose quality officers to KP&F agencies.
3. **Putting More Money in Streets** - Increasing the fund we have for streets by \$55,000 a year.
4. **Recruiting and Retaining Employees** - Allowing for modest increases in salary to get us closer to regional averages. We are at roughly 75% of what other cities in our area offer. Just like with OPD, we've become a training ground and aren't maintaining the expertise and skills we need to be successful in the long term.

So what does that mean for my home?

If your home went from an Appraised Value (AV) of \$100,000 to \$125,000, the math works like this:

OLD VALUE \$100,000 (AV) x 11.5% Assessment Rate (AR) = \$11,500 Assessed Value (ASV)

OLD TAX \$11,500 (ASV) x 80 mills (80/1000) = \$920.00 (Property Tax to Osawatome)

NEW VALUE \$125,000 (AV) x 11.5% Assessment Rate (AR) = \$14,375 Assessed Value (ASV)

NEW TAX \$14,375 (ASV) x 80 mills (80/1000) = \$1,150.00 (Property Tax to Osawatome)

That's an increase of \$230.00 a year or \$19.17 a month.

SPOTLIGHT | Michele Silsbee, Director of Public Works

The City of Osawatomi is pleased to welcome Michele Silsbee to our management team following the retirement of previous director, Bill Roseberry. Silsbee comes to us from the City of Olathe, and lives in Osawatomi with her husband and two daughters.



Tell us a little about your background; where did you grow up and go to school?

My family moved around a decent bit when I was growing up. We spent the most amount of time in a small town in SW Indiana before moving to Hutchinson, KS. I graduated from Buhler High School and have attended college at Hutchinson Community College, McPherson College, and Wichita State University.

You've lived in Osawatomi for a little over a year now. What inspired you to join our community?

Both my husband and I grew up in smaller towns and wanted that experience for our two children. Originally when looking for a new community we looked for areas that were commutable to Olathe, where I was working previously. We found Osawatomi and were impressed with the school district and all of the things going on around town.

We have a lot of projects on the horizon as a community; which are you looking forward to the most in your new position?

Honestly I'm really looking forward to working on the street rehab program with the first section of Brown Ave, 16th to 18th, starting up soon.

How can residents contact you with questions or concerns regarding public works projects?

I'm happy to answer questions by email (MSilsbee@OsawatomiKS.org) or by phone (913-755-2146 x231).



City of Osawatomi

Report Issues & Find Answers

Connect Via Text

Introducing a new way to skip a phone call and use your mobile phone's text messaging service to quickly report issues and/or find information on the go.

24/7 Assistance

Smart texting technology evaluates your input and searches keywords in order to provide you with assistance anytime, day or night.

Get Started

Text **Hi** or any of the featured keywords to: **913.557.8777**

ANOTHER WAY TO COMMUNICATE

Search information, ask questions, or report issues in the community directly from your phone's regular SMS text-messaging app. **No internet connection required!** This program also offers subscriptions to text notifications for general alerts or emergency alerts.

Text the words "Hi," "Hello," or "Hey" to 913-557-8777 to get started on an issue report or to ask a question!

To Signup for General Alerts: Text OZGENERAL to #91896
To Signup for Emergency Alerts: Text OZALERTS to #91896

Osawatomi Alerts (Additional Service Option)
Receive city text message notifications!
 To opt-in to receive **General Alerts**, text **OZGENERAL**
 For **Emergency Alerts**, text **OZALERTS**
 to: **91896**

What to Expect:

- After the initial keyword is sent, you will receive a confirmation message asking you to reply YES to verify opt-in.
- You will receive up to 4 text messages a month with a notification for each alert category selection.
- Message and data rates may apply. Check with your carrier for more details.

How to Opt-Out:

Text STOP at any time to remove yourself from the notification list.

