



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

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DEAR OSAWATOMIE,

BY BRET GLENDENING
CITY MANAGER

I write this re-introduction of myself from a position of humility.

I am humbled by the fact that our governing body and previous city manager would ask me to come back to serve this community once again. They recognize the position this city was in 17 years ago in August of 2006 when I arrived in Osawatomie, and recognize the effort it took to stabilize the city as an organization. From 1991 to 2006 Osawatomie went through seven managers... an average of less than two years per manager.

Since 2006, we have rebuilt streets and made investments in the wastewater and water treatment utilities. We are in the process of upgrading our electric distribution system. While all of these projects are in line with two of our five goals - repairing and replacing streets and investing in our hard infrastructure, none of these investments were happening through the 1990's and that period of time is how we find ourselves where we are today. We need to invest a lot of money across all areas of our city. I was hired in 2006 primarily for my financial background, and when I compare the city's balance sheet then, to what it is now and knowing the investments that have been made in this community over the last 17 years, I can honestly tell you the difference is truly night and day.

I know full well that these projects cost money. I also know all too well, that our valuations are increasing at historic rates. As a homeowner in Osawatomie, I want to see the investment my wife and I made in our home go up in value and I want to see the community investing in itself because the payoff for both of these investments benefits the entire community. I also understand that there is a limit to what any community can afford, so striking the right balance between investing in our community and doing so in a fiscally responsible way is what will guide us for the foreseeable future. I give you my word on that.

My office at City Hall is always open for residents who have questions about our community goals, who need help with an issue, or anyone who simply wants to share a thought or piece of wisdom. I look forward to continuing to work with all of you to make our hometown a better place. Stop by anytime or drop me a line:

bglendening@osawatomieks.org
913-755-2146 x101



Artist Stan Herd recently completed this earthwork portrait of abolitionist John Brown inside John Brown Memorial Park. The portrait marked the beginning of the City's quest for National Historical Park status as part of the National Park Service. Read more on the project inside this edition.

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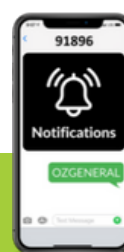
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CITY HALL | 439 MAIN STREET | 913-755-2146

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PSP PHASE II : THE HUB!

Following the success of the original Planning Sustainable Places planning effort in 2020/2021, the City applied for and was awarded an \$80,000 second phase "Implementation" grant through Mid-America Regional Council to continue developing plans for downtown revitalization and encouraging active transportation. Members of the project's steering committee interviewed several architecture and design teams before ultimately selecting Architect One, Vireo, and Shockley Consulting. This team of industry experts are leading the Osawatome community through another round of engagement and planning activities that narrow the focus of recommendations found in the 2020-2021 project, like completing sidewalk networks, creating a community hub downtown, and creating facilities that encourage active transportation (such as a bike share program).

The first community engagement sessions were held on July 18th and July 25th, at Osawatome Public Library and Memorial Hall, and were open to the public. Activities included mapping exercises, design surveys, grid layouts, and other personal preferences. A survey is also still available online, and paper copies can be provided upon request. Responses from these events will be used to fine-tune additional feedback opportunities throughout late summer and early fall.

While the planning activities and engagement sessions are happening across the community, a transitional plaza was developed in the vacant lots downtown thanks to assistance from a grant award from the Allen W. and Gladys Hawkins Foundation. This temporary "pop-up" plaza is working to transition the space from vacant to the future full-service Community Hub after the planning project is complete. Current amenities at the plaza include picnic seating, a small grass pad, and water/electric hookups for food trucks or other temporary retailers.

Get Involved!
OZ COMMONS
COMMUNITY HUB



Take our **SURVEY**
& learn about
upcoming meetings!

DEVELOPMENT IN THE NORTHLAND



Two signs, produced by local print shop Pat's Signs, are in place at the intersection of 335th and Osawatome Road at the future site of the solar array.

The City of Osawatome and Evergy are excited to be breaking ground soon on a 5MW solar array in the City's Northland! Located north of Osawatome State Hospital, at the intersection of 335th and Osawatome Road, this new facility will be a welcome addition to the City's electric generation portfolio. The array will cover roughly 40% of the 76-acre parcel owned by the City of Osawatome and the formal groundbreaking is planned for October 12th, 2023. Energization of the array is planned for the Spring of 2024.

City Council approved through Resolution a Power Purchase Agreement with Evergy, which will allow the City of Osawatome to purchase electricity generated by the array. This sustainable, cost-efficient option will increase the City's energy portfolio and reduce our reliance on diesel and natural gas generators during emergencies, peak seasons, and other irregular events. While the City is under no obligation to purchase the array at any point in time, changes in the Inflation Reduction Act mean the City now has the option to buy the array after three years, down from the original seven-year threshold.

The parcel being utilized is part of the City's "Northland" portfolio, which includes roughly 300 acres of land given to the community by the State of Kansas to use for large-scale economic development.



2023 PAVING THE WAY PROGRAM UPDATE

Main Street Terrace and 18th Street in west Osawatomie are nearing the finish line after several weeks of heavy construction. The final lift of asphalt will be placed at the same time that Walnut Avenue from 4th to 6th receives asphalt. Clean-up and seeding will happen around that same time. Concrete work for **Walnut Avenue** began on July 24th, with curb and gutter being laid first followed by driveways and sidewalks. Asphalt will begin once the concrete has fully cured. Contractor Killough Construction estimates that all three streets should be completed by the first week of August. The three street projects contain a combined total of 1,467 linear feet of new storm sewer and each newly constructed road includes 6" of compacted subgrade, 6" of AB3, and 9" of asphalt. **Main Street Terrace** also received a layer of GeoGrid to address stabilization. Each street also received the City's standard 5' sidewalks and the replacement of all driveway approaches with steel-reinforced 6" concrete to the right-of-way line. The total initial bid for this multi-street rehab project was \$1,734,521.07, and was awarded in August of 2022.

The full-depth reconstruction of **Brown Avenue from 7th to 12th Streets** is also underway. Water lines have been completely installed with testing this week and the installation of new storm sewer is scheduled for the first week of August, barring any unforeseen complications. The new storm sewer will require a temporary closure of Main Street to allow crews to connect to the existing infrastructure, which may take upwards of three weeks to complete. More information on this project will be made available soon as plans formalize.

The much-anticipated full-depth reconstruction of **6th Street from Lincoln Avenue to Kelly Avenue** is still in design phase and estimated at 75% designed. Public meetings were conducted throughout May and June and City officials continue to work with impacted businesses and residents while designs finalize. Staff is hopeful that the design phase will be completed in fall 2023 which would allow the project to go to bid in late 2023. It's anticipated that construction will break ground as soon as spring weather hits next year. In the interim, utility relocations and other necessary prep work may begin this summer and continue into the fall -- so watch out for road closures, road workers, and detours as the weather heats up!

JOURNEY TOWARD A NATIONAL PARK

For nearly three years, abolitionist John Brown organized and led his antislavery forces from Osawatomie, using the Adair's cabin as his de facto headquarters, before leaving to plan his raid at Harpers Ferry. Osawatomie is so central to John Brown's story that it became his nickname; when Lieutenant J.E.B. Stuart confronted him at Harpers Ferry, he recognized him, saying, "You are Osawatomie Brown, of Kansas?"

The Harpers Ferry National Historical Park in West Virginia is nearly 4,000 acres, employs 49 people, and has an annual federal budget of over \$7 million. This park began as a monument to John Brown and his infamous raid on the federal armory, an event which many believe ignited the Civil War. Brown's actions in Harpers Ferry captured the attention of the dividing nation like no other event had before, and millions of people followed Brown's trial and later execution. But Lieutenant J.E.B. Stuart's question to Brown on that fateful day still echoes as we wonder, "Without Osawatomie, is there a Harpers Ferry?" Would John Brown's raid have been anything more than a petty skirmish if Brown hadn't gained national notoriety during his time in Kansas and in Osawatomie? Would Harpers Ferry have been national news if the riotous actions of Bleeding Kansas hadn't already been fueling the division between free-state and proslavery forces?

In honor of that legacy, City officials are continuing their work toward the creation of Osawatomie's own National Historical Park. The vision is to protect, preserve, and promote Osawatomie's storied past for future generations of not only Kansans, but Americans. As part of this effort, the City of Osawatomie partnered with acclaimed crop artist Stan Herd to create the world's first earthwork portrait of the abolitionist inside John Brown Memorial Park. Dignitaries from across the state were invited to its unveiling to celebrate the story of Osawatomie and learn more about our plight toward National Park status. The portrait was funded in part by a grant from the Allen W. and Gladys Hawkins Charitable Foundation and Greater Osawatomie, Inc.

Officials are continuing to work with state and national delegations on the next steps in this journey toward National Park status, including a request for a reconnaissance survey and site visits from federal officials.

SPOTLIGHT | Earthwork Portrait of John Brown by Stan Herd

Legendary Kansas crop artist Stan Herd (pictured below in black) and his team of artists [HerdWorks, LLC] worked with City of Osawatomie officials to create this one-of-a-kind masterpiece inside John Brown Memorial Park with help from the Allen W. and Gladys Hawkins Foundation



City of Osawatomie

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
- To Signup for Road Work Alerts: Text OZROADS to #91896

Osawatomie 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.

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