

# VOICE



**JUNETEENTH**

## You're invited: Prairie Village's annual Juneteenth Freedom Celebration

The Prairie Village Juneteenth Freedom Celebration will begin at 4 p.m. Saturday, June 17 in Harmon Park.

Juneteenth is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. From its Galveston, Texas origin in 1865, the observance of June 19 as the African American Emancipation Day has spread across the United States and beyond.

The annual, free event offers the opportunity to enjoy a late afternoon and early evening of food, drink and fun featuring music from the band Funk Syndicate. A variety of activities for the whole family will be available, including face painting, balloon artists, arts and crafts, games and inflatables. Several Black-owned vendors will be on-hand at the event.

Winners of the Juneteenth poster and essay contests will be announced. The goal of the

contests is to provide an opportunity for children, youth and families to learn more about Juneteenth, create a poster or essay about it and join together for this celebration. The theme for both contests is "What Juneteenth Freedom Means to Me." Prizes will be awarded for first, second and third place in each age bracket: 5-6 year-olds, 7-9 year-olds and 10-12 year-olds for the poster contest and 13-15 year-olds and 16-18 year-olds for the essay contest. Submission deadline is June 5, 2023. More information at [standupblacklives.com](http://standupblacklives.com).

This event is sponsored by: STAND-Up for Black Lives+ PV, PV Diversity Committee, JCNAACP and Village Church. Free parking is available at the Shawnee Mission East lot off of Mission Road, the PV Pool lot off Delmar, Mission Bible Church and Community of Christ Church.

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# Elected Officials

## MAYOR

Eric Mikkelson  
913-385-4600 • [mayor@pvkansas.com](mailto:mayor@pvkansas.com)

## WARD I

Chad Herring  
913-383-8752 • [cherring@pvkansas.com](mailto:cherring@pvkansas.com)

Cole Robinson  
785-979-6094 • [crobinson@pvkansas.com](mailto:crobinson@pvkansas.com)

## WARD II

Ron Nelson  
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## WARD III

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Lauren Wolf  
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## WARD IV

Piper Reimer  
816-510-8573 • [preimer@pvkansas.com](mailto:preimer@pvkansas.com)

Dave Robinson  
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## WARD V

Courtney McFadden  
816-804-6329 • [cmcfadden@pvkansas.com](mailto:cmcfadden@pvkansas.com)

Greg Shelton  
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## WARD VI

Terrence Gallagher  
913-642-4163 • [tgallagher@pvkansas.com](mailto:tgallagher@pvkansas.com)

Ian Graves  
913-336-2615 • [igraves@pvkansas.com](mailto:igraves@pvkansas.com)

Unsure which ward you live in?  
Visit [www.pvkansas.com/wardmap](http://www.pvkansas.com/wardmap).

# A Message from the Mayor



Dear friends and neighbors,

Along with warmer weather, spring brings development of next year's budget. We build those city budgets from the ground up. The annual exercise focuses on the "nuts-and-bolts" fundamentals of efficiently delivering essential City services at the high quality our residents expect. Our 2024 budget will be no exception.

It's been said of public budgets: "Don't tell me what you value, show me your budget and I will tell you what you value." One look at 2023's \$28 million general fund budget shows four "Ps" of what we value most: Police, Paving, Parks and People.

**Police.** The foundation of our local excellence is built on public safety. Prairie Village is one of the safest cities in the country. That's not easy or cheap. We prioritize support for the outstanding men and women in uniform working 24-7 to keep us safe. Staffing, training and equipping our respected police force is our main investment (around 40% of general fund), with a large share of that for patrol.

**Paving and Parks.** We maintain our roads, sidewalks, drainage and infrastructure at levels exceeding peer cities. Streets get most of those capital dollars. We also have a new five-year plan to upgrade our world-class parks throughout the city. We invest approximately one-third of our general fund budget in Public Works.

**People.** Underpinning our civic excellence is our outstanding staff. When we felt the strain of staffing challenges along with all cities, we acted swiftly here with compensation adjustments. Those, combined with our culture of workplace satisfaction and excellence, allowed us to maintain top-tier personnel. This means more efficient and excellent delivery of City services from us to you, person to person.

The average home value increase this year (16.5%) was more than any other Johnson County city. That boosted homeowners' collective wealth by hundreds of millions. That success is no accident; the investments described above create conditions conducive to such appreciation.

That value appreciation also has collateral impacts. Mindful of that, we implemented the single-largest City property tax rate reduction in more than a generation (the second-lowest property tax rate of all 26 first-class Kansas cities). Expanded rebate programs allowed a 94-year old widow on fixed income, a 70-year resident, to see her effective City property tax rate go to 0%. With home values outpacing wages, workers in some professions are also getting priced out of Prairie Village. Creatively meeting these challenges will further strengthen neighborhoods and values.

Despite our recent local prosperity, economic headwinds persist, including inflation. For the first time in a half-century, our population is growing. Workforce competition remains fierce. Delivering at high levels under such conditions takes increased resources.

With your help, our 2024 budget will again focus on the four P's above. We will maintain responsible "rainy day" fund balances. We will sustainably invest for next generations of Prairie Villagers as we daily enjoy the benefits of past civic investments.

We welcome your input in demonstrating our shared civic values through our 2024 budget process.

Best regards,

-Eric





# Forums on housing recommendations set for June & July

## Single-family districts not included in forum conversation

The first public forum to discuss Prairie Village housing recommendations is scheduled for June 22 at Meadowbrook Park Clubhouse. The open house-style event will take place from 4-7 p.m. and will be hosted by MultiStudio, the City's professional planning consultants.

During an April Planning Commission meeting, City Planner Chris Brewster said the intent of the forum is to take a look at potential housing options for some residential districts (R-2, R-3 and R-4), mixed-use districts and commercial districts. This includes possibly finding ways to incorporate more duplexes, triplexes, row houses and apartments into some parts of the city currently zoned for multi-unit housing. Single-family (R-1) districts will not be part of the discussion at these open houses. R-1 districts will be considered separately.

Another goal is to increase awareness and understanding of the housing options that could come to these specific districts with potential zoning changes.

The June forum will be an open house-style gathering, allowing residents to come and go. Attendees will be invited to visit three different stations addressing different themes: The current state of zoning districts, what could change, and what people want.

A second forum is planned for July 13 for those who cannot attend the event in June. There will also be an opportunity for online input.

After the forums, Brewster said the plan is to schedule two or three work sessions with the Planning Commission over a few months to work on potential housing recommendations. Once those wrap up, there may be another public forum to present the outcomes. Before any proposed changes are enacted, a public hearing will be held.

To stay up-to-date on discussions, be sure to sign up for e-notifications at [pvkansas.com/enews](http://pvkansas.com/enews).



## Pool Passes

Pool passes for the 2023 season are on sale now. To purchase your membership or see pool rules and hours, visit [www.pvkansas.com/pool](http://www.pvkansas.com/pool). The pool complex is scheduled to open May 27.

# Dates to Note

Date	Event	Time	Location
5/1	Council Meeting	6 p.m.	City Hall
5/2	BZA/Planning Commission	6:30 p.m.	City Hall
5/10	Art of Photography Reception	7 p.m.	City Hall
5/15	Council Meeting	6 p.m.	City Hall
5/29	Memorial Day - City offices closed	All day	All City offices
6/5	Council Meeting	6 p.m.	City Hall
6/6	Planning Commission	7 p.m.	City Hall
6/17	Juneteenth Festival	4-8 p.m.	Harmon Park
6/19	Juneteenth - City offices closed	All day	All City offices
6/20	Council Meeting	6 p.m.	City Hall
6/22	Housing Forum	4-7 p.m.	Meadowbrook



*The Prairie Village Diversity Committee invites you to celebrate*

# Pride

## MONTH

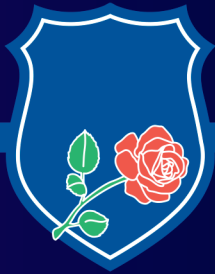
THIS JUNE

For a year-long diversity and inclusion calendar, including religious holidays, heritage months, and monthly diversity program themes, please visit

[pvkansas.com/diversitycommittee](http://pvkansas.com/diversitycommittee)



The Prairie Village Diversity Committee invites you to celebrate May as Mental Health Awareness Month, Jewish American Heritage Month, and Asian American and Pacific Island Heritage Month. June is LGBTQ Pride Month and Caribbean American Heritage Month. For a year-long diversity and inclusion calendar, including religious holidays, heritage months, and monthly diversity program themes, please visit [pvkansas.com/diversitycommittee](http://pvkansas.com/diversitycommittee).



# National Police Week

Respect. Honor. Remember.

May 14 - 20

**Peace Officers  
Memorial Ceremony**

May 15  
7:30 a.m.

Municipal Complex  
7700 Mission Road

## Police Department reminds residents about 9PM routine

As we move into nicer weather this spring and summer, remember the #9PMRoutine. We all stay out later and enjoy the outdoors. Make sure to close your garage doors, secure your vehicles, and remove valuables from your cars. Thieves are looking for easy targets and following the #9PM Routine is one way to keep your valuables protected and your families safe!

### #9PMRoutine

- ⚠️ Remove valuables from vehicles
- ⚠️ Lock vehicle doors
- ⚠️ Close the garage door
- ⚠️ Close & lock all exterior doors
- ⚠️ Turn on exterior light
- ✅ #9PMRoutine complete



**PRAIRIE VILLAGE  
JAZZ  
FESTIVAL**

September 9  
3 p.m. - 10 p.m.  
Harmon Park

**Save  
the  
date!**

*prairie village*  
**ART of  
PHOTOGRAPHY**

## Showing soon: Art of Photography

The Prairie Village Arts Council will present Art of Photography 2023 May 8th through July 7th at the R.G. Endres Gallery at Prairie Village City Hall. The opening reception with artists will be on Wednesday, May 10 at 7:00-8:30 p.m. where we will present eleven award-winning photographs with over \$3,500 in cash prizes, including a \$250 Peoples' Choice Award. The artists for this regional exhibition hail from as far away as Independence, Kansas and Lawson, Missouri, but the majority are from right here in Johnson County including two of our very own Prairie Village photographers: Marshall Rimann and Giacomo Avogadro! We hope you can join us for the reception or visit the exhibit. Open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., except for federal holidays.





# National Public Works Week

May 21-27

## CONNECTING THE WORLD THROUGH PUBLIC WORKS



**MAY  
25  
4:30-6:30**



Prairie Village Public Works

# TOUCH -A- TRUCK

## 3535 SOMERSET

**Free Family Fun!**

Public Works staff will display and demonstrate a wheel loader, skid steer, dump truck and more! All ages are invited to attend.

For more information visit [www.pvkansas.com](http://www.pvkansas.com)

## Ward boundaries updated to adjust for population growth

The boundaries of the Prairie Village ward map were revised this spring to adjust for recent population growth.

Prairie Village is divided into six wards for representative purposes. Two council members are elected from each ward. City Attorney David Waters explained that state law requires wards to be divided as equally as possible and that each ward should ideally be within 5% of the average ward population which is 3,828 people.

Due to Prairie Village's recent population growth, including the development of Meadowbrook Park and its surrounding housing, some of Prairie Village's wards were no longer within the recommended 5% of the population average. Ward 1 and Ward 5 were higher than the desired average while Ward 2 and Ward 4 were lower than the desired average.

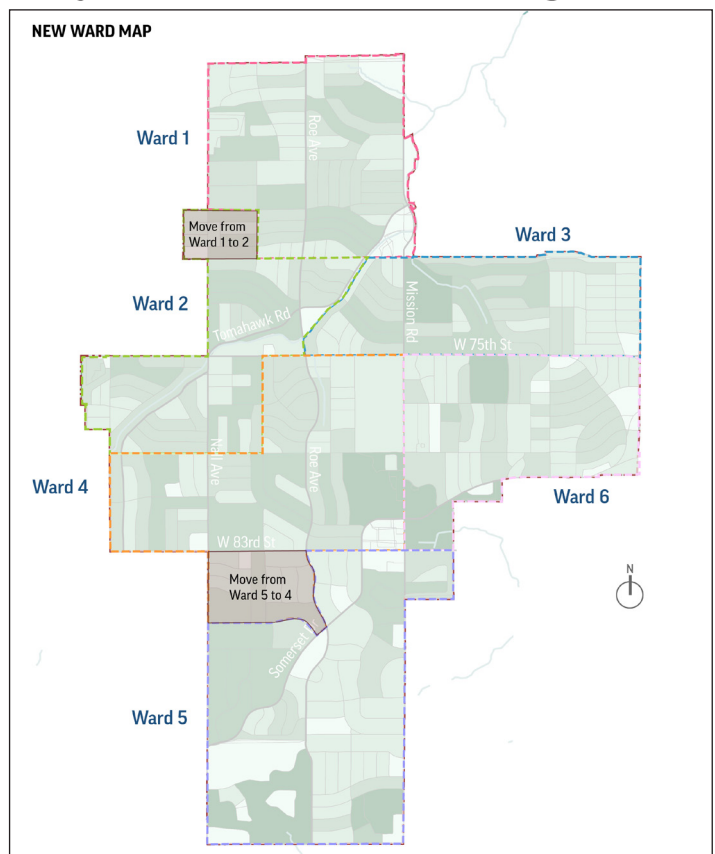
City staff worked with a professional planning consultant to adjust the ward boundaries to meet ward size requirements. Staff worked to avoid splitting established

neighborhoods when possible, to keep boundaries simple so that the average resident can recognize what ward they are in, and to limit changes to existing ward boundaries as much as possible.

Effective April 11, homes between Fonticello Street and Reeds Road to the east and west, and 69th to 71st streets to the north and south will shift from Ward 1 to Ward 2. Homes between roughly Nall and Roe avenues and 83rd and 86th streets are moving from Ward 5 to Ward 4. Based on 2022 population numbers from the U.S. Census Bureau, the new ward boundaries move 414 residents from Ward 1 to Ward 2 and 497 residents from Ward 5 to Ward 4.

State law dictates the timing for changes to ward boundaries. Changes can only be made at a time that will not interfere with election procedures. City staff worked with the Johnson County Election Commissioner on the timing and process for adopting updated ward boundaries.

Public Information Officer



Ashley Freburg said that adopting the new ward map prior to the November election has practical implications.

“If the new ward boundaries were not in effect until after the election, residents affected by

the changes would be voting for a candidate who, ultimately, would not represent them,” Freburg said.

Those households impacted by the changes will receive a letter from the City.

# Prairie Elementary Green Team named Arbor Day Honoree

The Green Team, a group of more than 20 fourth to sixth grade students at Prairie Elementary School, was named as the 2023 Arbor Day honoree by the Prairie Village Tree Board.

In her nomination, Prairie Elementary parent Melinda Lewis described some of the Green Team's accomplishments. "In just their first year, these students have worked to reduce air pollution by designating and promoting Idle-Free Zones at the school, organized Walking Wednesdays each week, learned about city environmental initiatives, cleaned up trash during weekend workdays, and convinced the PTA to choose alternatives to disposable plastic water bottles for school events," according to Melinda. Green Team students also volunteered with

Prairie Village's arborist and other Public Works staff to mulch trees in city parks and hosted a bake/make sale to raise money to buy additional trees to plant on school property.

Melinda outlined the Green Team's three-pronged approach: (1) Education, e.g. bringing in speakers to the school to talk about environmental issues; (2) Direct Action, e.g., trash cleanups, and maintaining the school garden; and (3) Advocacy, e.g., letting other students know that they have a voice and can have an impact. Recently, two Green Team members advocated before Prairie Village Council members to express their support for a proposed greenhouse gas audit. Melinda noted how these students, "have given many people in our community hope

and motivated many grown-ups to make decisions and take action, in pursuit of a 'greener' future."

The Green Team students continue to impress their school principal Kristen Jones with their degree of engagement, but she says she could have predicted great things from this same group of students.

"Four of the girls involved started their own website called STW ("Save the World") as second graders three years ago at the beginning of the pandemic," she said.

To honor the Green Team, the Public Works Department and Tree Board planted a native Shagbark Hickory tree and held an Arbor Day event that took place at Porter Park the morning of Saturday, April 29.

## Environmental Committee encourages sustainable lawns

A sustainable lawn is environmentally friendly, low-maintenance, and cost-effective. It is designed to reduce water usage, decrease the use of chemicals and fertilizers, and minimize waste. A sustainable lawn also promotes biodiversity by providing habitat for native plants, pollinators, and wildlife. Basically, it exists in greater harmony with nature.

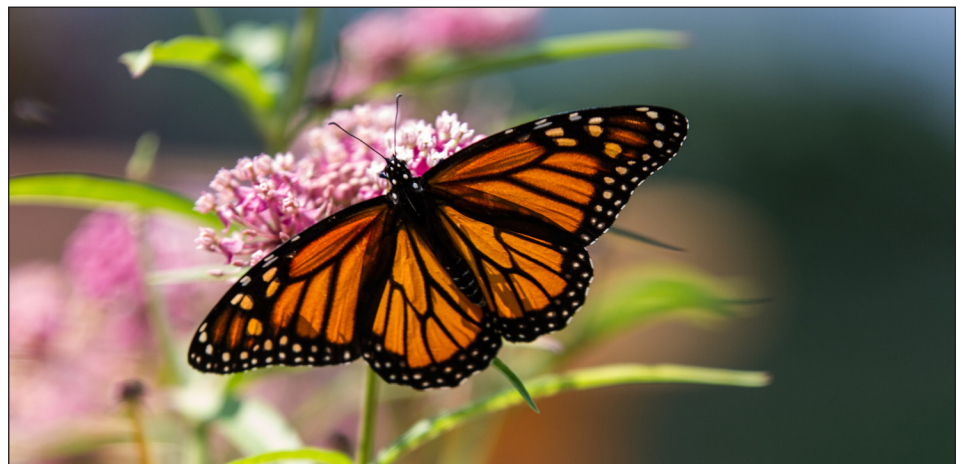
How can you create a sustainable lawn in Prairie Village? There are several changes to traditional lawn care to consider implementing, individually or in concert for any even greater impact:

1. Choose the right grass: In Kansas, buffalo grass is an excellent option for a sustainable lawn. It requires less water and maintenance than other grasses, making it an excellent choice for sustainable lawns. However, there are other native grasses and ground covers, like clover, that can also be used; all have their own pros and cons.

2. Reduce water usage: Even though Prairie Village has sufficient water resources, reducing water usage is still an important step in creating a sustainable lawn. Water your lawn less frequently and use a rain barrel to collect rainwater for irrigation. Alternative grasses and ground covers, like the ones mentioned above, naturally require less watering.

3. Use natural fertilizers: Instead of using synthetic fertilizers, use natural fertilizers like compost. These fertilizers are better for the environment and promote healthier soil.

4. Mow high: When you mow your lawn,



set your mower to a higher setting. This will help to promote healthy grass roots and reduce water usage.

5. Promote biodiversity: Consider planting native plants and flowers in or around your yard. These plants will provide habitat for birds, butterflies, and other important wildlife. Milkweed, in particular, is easy to grow and comes in a variety of sizes and colors, making it a versatile option to increase the sustainability of your yard while also enhancing the visual appeal. Including plants in this family will have a direct impact the health of the monarch population in our community.

When taking measures to increase the sustainability of your lawn, it is important to be aware of the Prairie Village landscaping codes. For example, according to the Prairie Village Code of Ordinances, grass must not exceed 8 inches in height (this happens to be the maximum growth height of Buf-

falo Grass). Homeowners should review the landscaping codes before making any changes to their lawn. You can access the Prairie Village property maintenance code on the City's website, [pvkansas.com](http://pvkansas.com). Click on the "Municipal Code" button halfway down the page, then search "Property Maintenance Code."

Creating a sustainable lawn in Prairie Village is an important step residents can take towards conserving resources, reducing the use of chemicals and fertilizers, and promoting biodiversity. By following the steps outlined above you can create a lawn that is much more environmentally friendly while maintaining compliance with local regulations. Many people find that with just a few changes in their lawn care routine, they are able to spend less time, money and resources on lawn care while greatly enhancing the health and beauty of their property.



## Second survey indicates support for community center

Wiese Research Group has completed a second research survey in consideration of the construction of a new community center in partnership between the City of Prairie Village and the YMCA of Greater Kansas City. Results of the survey were scheduled to be presented to the Governing Body on April 17. The community center would replace the existing YMCA facility and would potentially offer a full range of services. A market assessment was previously completed in December 2019

which revealed strong support of both a community center and the relocation of the Corinth Library to be in close proximity. The second study was commissioned to have a better pulse of community interest and support post COVID-19. The results of the second survey indicated continued community support for the project.

Read about the project history and updates, and access the survey's summary results at <https://www.pvkansas.com/departments/projects/community-center>.

## Yard waste reminders

In Prairie Village, yard waste is picked up weekly on trash day. Yard waste can be in bio-degradable yard waste bags, tied in bundles or in trash cans/rigid container of 33-gallon capacity or less. Residents are allowed 12 yard waste items per week, year round.

Cans must be marked "yard waste," have holes drilled in the bottom to allow water to drain, and must have a lid. All items must be inside the container, not sticking out the top.

Do not put sticks and branches in rigid containers. They should be tied in bundles no larger than four feet in length, less than 18 inches in circumference, and less than 50 pounds. Bundles must be tied together with twine. Individual branches within the bundle cannot be more than three inches in diameter. Logs are not accepted.

Items picked up include only natural yard waste, i.e. grass, leaves, tree limbs, flower or garden plants (without their pots), walnuts, crabapples, Christmas trees, etc. All materials collected are taken to a licensed compost facility. This recycling facility does not allow for ANY trash, landscape, or construction materials. Animal waste is not collected.

## Sustainability firm hired to create climate action plan

Work is underway to create a climate action plan to help the City reach its commitment to achieve net-zero carbon emissions by 2040 or sooner.

This spring, the Prairie Village City Council approved an agreement with Keramida, Inc. to create a sustainability program for the City. Keramida is a global sustainability services

firm based out of Indianapolis.

The Keramida team is working with City staff to develop short-term and long-term goals for municipal activities that will help reduce carbon emissions. The firm will also make recommendations to the city about future management of a sustainability program.

## Staff Spotlight

Name: **JD Kinney**  
Position: **Special Events Coordinator**  
Years with the City: **2**

Responsibilities: **I coordinate the City's financial and material support for special community events including VillageFest, JazzFest, the Mayor's Holiday Tree Lighting, and others.**

Favorite thing about working for Prairie Village: **My favorite thing about working for Prairie Village is bringing the community together through fun, shared events.**



Name: **Patrick Lisky**  
Position: **Grounds Crew Maintenance**  
Years with the City: **5**

Responsibilities: **As part of the grounds crew, I'm responsible for taking care of turf and applications to it. I'm also responsible for maintaining irrigation and making necessary repairs.**

Favorite thing about working for Prairie Village: **I like being able to try new techniques for weed management to improve the turf in our parks and sports fields.**



Name: **Shelby Clark**  
Position: **Patrol Officer**  
Years with the City: **4.5**

Responsibilities: **I am currently assigned to the patrol division, where I respond to calls for service and interact with the community on a day to day basis. Additionally, I am a Field Training Officer which means I train the new officers over the course of 16 weeks of how to be a police officer. I hold many other positions within the department, such as, Fitness Instructor, Peer Support Team Member and Recruiting Team Member.**

Favorite thing about working for Prairie Village: **My favorite part about the Prairie Village Police Department is that I am able to work in the metro area but still get to experience the small town feel – since our city/department is so small. Because of our size, I get to know my co-workers and community members more directly and gain so many more experiences and opportunities at an earlier stage in my career than I would at a bigger department.**



Prairie Village Municipal Office  
7700 Mission Road  
Prairie Village, KS 66208

Reader Feedback  
Please send your comments to:  
info@pvkansas.com  
913-385-4674



## Calling all bakers!

It's time to break out the rolling pin and brush up on your baking skills. The annual pie baking contest will return to VillageFest on July 4!

- No entry fee required
  - Cash prizes awarded
  - From-scratch pies (crust & filling) only
- Registration is limited, with walk-ups accepted only if space is available. Advance registration is available at [www.pvkansas.com/VillageFest](http://www.pvkansas.com/VillageFest).



## You're invited: VillageFest 2023

Mark your calendars for the annual VillageFest celebration on July 4. Kick off the holiday with a pancake breakfast beginning at 7:30 a.m. and enjoy free, family-friendly activities from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Crowd favorites returning this year include the giant slip n' slide, pie baking contest, bounce houses, children's bike parade, Mr. Bones, children's crafts, musical entertainment, face & hair painting, food vendors, and much more. All events take place on the municipal campus located at 77th Street and Mission Road. Event details can be found at [www.pvkansas.com/VillageFest](http://www.pvkansas.com/VillageFest). And of course, remember to nominate your favorite Prairie Village resident or business for a Community Spirit Award. Nominations are due by May 15.

## City Contact Information

913-381-6464 ■ [info@pvkansas.com](mailto:info@pvkansas.com) ■ [www.pvkansas.com](http://www.pvkansas.com)

### CITY HALL AND MUNICIPAL COURT

7700 Mission Road

Wes Jordan, City Administrator

Nickie Lee, Deputy City Administrator

Meghan Buum, Assistant City Administrator

Tim Schwartzkopf, Assistant City Administrator

Adam Geffert, City Clerk

Jason Hannaman, Finance Director

### POLICE DEPARTMENT

7710 Mission Road

Byron Roberson, Chief of Police

### PUBLIC WORKS (Facility now home to Building Codes)

3535 Somerset Drive

Keith Bredehoeft, Public Works Director

### SOCIAL MEDIA

Are you on social media? Follow the City of Prairie Village and the Police Department for the most up-to-date information on City happenings.



### DONATE

If you would like to make a donation to the Prairie Village Foundation, open your smartphone's camera and hover over this QR Code. A page will pop up directing you to the Foundation's website.



### EVERYONE MAY PARTICIPATE

If anyone requires an accommodation to participate in public meetings, contact the City Clerk's office at 913-381-6464 (TDD 800-766-2777) at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled meeting time, if possible, to make arrangements.