

# Brookland News

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## *From the Mayor's Desk:*

I cannot believe that October 1, 2024, is already here. Just seems like yesterday we turned the page on 2023. We do the newsletter to try to keep all citizens informed about what is going on with projects in our city. Good news or bad news, you the citizens of Brookland have a right to know. So let's begin with the park projects.

I know the citizens are frustrated that it is taking so long to see these parks completed. I am right there with you. I have lost more sleep over these parks than I would like to talk about. However, the fact remains that inflation has really caused some issues with the sports complex. The city council and I decided several months ago to move forward with the Bernis/Smith and E Matthews/Nelms parks to complete them. When we ordered the playground equipment back in January of 2024, we knew it would be May of 2024 before it was delivered. Equipment was delivered in April. Being naive, I thought in a couple of months we would have these two parks completed. As I wrote last quarter's newsletter, I thought we will have the two parks completed by August 2024. Well here it is a week away from the first of October and the playground people just completed the rubber mat under the playground equipment. The contractor called me Monday, September 23 and said due to the forecast of rain, he did not think we needed to start dirt work on walking trail and parking area. I told the contractor to move forward, if it rained, we would help get the water off the area, as needed, to dry.

The Sports-plex is going to be re-bid. The bid package will include the two north fields, concession stand, entry road, and parking. This has been a catastrophe due to this inflation. The Brookland City Council and I want you, the citizens, to know that due to inflation, we are doing everything we can, to provide citizens a useful product on the sports-plex project, with the available funds we have.

The new extension of W Matthews to Hwy 49 is complete. Currently when you are entering Hwy 49, you can only turn right toward Paragould.

The City Council agreed to move forward with the overlay of W Matthews between Holman (Hwy 49B) and S Oak Street. Asphalt pavers have been contacted asking for quotes to overlay the street, and our goal is to get it complete before November. Once this is finished, it will give drivers another through street between HWY 49 and Holman. First responders for BFPD and city police will also have a safe access to get across town during school traffic.

The City of Brookland and Brookland School is working together trying to help ease the congestion of school traffic. The city added a passing lane to Brookland Elementary at the north end of N Hickory Street. This allows vehicles going to Brookland Elementary to safely pass Brookland Primary School traffic. This has cut around 10 minutes of traffic on School and N Hickory. The city and the school are now in negotiations with a land owner, trying to purchase right of way on the north side of Brookland Middle School. The purpose of the

street will be for school traffic drop off and pickup. If we can get this accomplished this will mean a big change in school traffic flow.

The city advertised and selected a company to install a sewer line that will run from the back side of Brookland Hills up to and across Dixie Road (formerly Hwy 230). The addition of this sewer main will allow homes and businesses to have sewer that currently have no sewer available, while extending sewer to the new school property. Construction on the new school is supposed to start in March of 2025 with completion in 2026. Superintendent Bunch and the school board is addressing the traffic issue and parking at this facility in the design of the building. City officials and Craighead County personnel will be attending a meeting in October that will give us a progress update on the signal lights at both School Street and Pine Log Road. I will report on these two items in the January newsletter. The Utility Department will have its first water and sewer rate increase in 14 years. In 2023, the Arkansas State Legislature passed Senate Bill 386 also known as Act 605 that regulate the oversight of municipal utilities such as water and wastewater. Act 605 require a municipality to every five years to have a rate study done and adjust their utility rates according to the rate study findings. Act 605 states a municipality water and wastewater treatment shall provide adequate revenue for the owning municipality to build a reserve for Operations and Maintenance, Debt Service, Required Reserves,

Depreciation, Future Capital Expenses, and have an Annual Audit or agreed-upon procedures and compilation report. The second reading of the Ordinance to address this issue will be October 8, 2024 at 7:00 pm at City Hall.

Brookland Utilities is adopting a new water meter shut off policy. Unfortunately, our utility employees that go out and knock on customers doors, to collect past due bills, are receiving threats for doing their job. This is not just happening here in Brookland, but all across the country. Because of this, it is time to change the process of handling water disconnections. Effective January 1, 2025, we no longer will be knocking on doors to collect payment; meters will be shut off beginning at 9am the morning of disconnections for non-payment. Several of our meters are now Ally meters, which are turned off via computer through the office and will only be turned back on during office hours. To avoid any disruption of water service, customers are encouraged to pay their bills or make arrangements prior to shut-off day.

We knew that our city one day would be asked by a business, to approve them to apply for a liquor license. That day is now. LaCascada Mexican Restaurant has asked the city to approve by ordinance their request to apply to the ABC Board in Little Rock to receive a liquor license. The second reading of Ordinance 2024-18 will be October 8, 2024, on this issue.

We have a lot going on in our city. Houses being built, 2 strip malls under construction, and several new businesses are looking to build here.

Brookland Public School has an enrollment of 3,264 students this year. BPS is maintaining a high

academics rate, winning conference and state championships in all aspects of school functions. GO BEARCATS!

As we head into the holiday season, I want to remind everyone to be safe, and have a great Holiday Season.

*Mayor Jones*



**Brookland  
Christmas Parade  
Dec. 1 @ 2:00 pm**



The City of Brookland is scheduled to have the 23rd annual Christmas parade on Sunday, Dec. 1 at 2:00 pm.

The theme is "Santa's Toyland". Judging begins at 1:00 pm. The parade will start at Brookland High School parking lot and go south on Holman to Stevens Street, west on Stevens to S. Oak Street. The parade will then turn north to W. School Street and it will end up back at the school.

**Community  
Calendar:**



10/01 - Planning Commission meeting @ 7:00 pm

10/08- City Council meeting @ 7:00 pm

10/14 - City offices closed for Columbus Day

10/21 - Parks Committee meeting @ 7:00pm



11/05 - Planning Commission meeting @ 7:00 pm

11/11 - City offices closed for Veteran's Day

11/12 - City Council meeting @ 7:00 pm

11/18 - Parks Committee meeting @ 7:00 pm

11/28-29 - Offices closed for Thanksgiving Holiday



12/01 - Christmas Parade @ 2:00 pm. Theme "Santa's Toyland"

12/03- Planning Commission meeting @ 7:00 pm

12/10 - City Council meeting @ 7:00 pm

12/16 - Parks Committee meeting @ 7:00 pm

12/25-26 City offices closed for Christmas holiday

1/1/25 - City offices closed for New Year's holiday



**Christmas Light  
Contest**

The annual residential Brookland Christmas light judging will be December

10. Judges will be driving around town on this date looking at residential lighting displays. Prize money in the amounts of \$100 for first place; \$75 for second place and \$50 for third place will be awarded. Signs recognizing the winners will be placed in their yards throughout the holiday season.



**Notes from the Police Dept. regarding adequate visible address on residence:**



*This is an annual reminder to residents that while responding to calls, it is often difficult to locate houses due to the house number not being properly displayed. The ambulance and fire department personnel also have difficulty finding addresses of residents who are in need of immediate emergency assistance. BPD wants to urge residents to repair or replace damaged house numbers or to purchase house numbers and place them on your house if your home doesn't have any, to make it easier to respond to your location in the event of an emergency. Brookland Police Department also wants to urge motorists to please slowdown be cautious of young children along the streets as they are trick-or-treating.*



**Animal Control/Code Enforcement**

**\*\*Introducing Your New Animal Control and Code Enforcement Officer\*\***

Hello, my name is Wade Shapp, and I'm excited to serve as your new Animal Control Officer and Code Enforcement Officer for the City of Brookland. My goal is to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of our residents and businesses.

We've recently introduced an easy way to report animal complaints and code violations online. Simply visit [cityofbrookland.com](http://cityofbrookland.com), and under the City Government tab, select Animal Control or Code Enforcement to submit your concerns.

I look forward to working together to keep our community safe and thriving!

**Residential Swimming Pool Discharge Guidance -City of Brookland-**

**How to drain or backwash your pool and spa WHILE PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT**

Pool owners may be tempted to discharge chlorinated or saline pool water into the street and gutter that leads to a storm drain. However, the purpose of the storm drain system is to protect against flooding and water damage by quickly removing rainwater from our streets. This water gets no treatment and may ultimately drain into creeks, lakes, and rivers. The City of Brookland has permits and ordinance to reduce the pollutants into our storm drains and is why the disposal of chlorinated or saline swimming pool and spa water to the storm water drain systems is prohibited. Remember to dispose of unwanted pool chemicals as household hazardous waste.

The City of Brookland's storm water drains into the Lower St. Francis River Watershed.

In Arkansas, the disposal of swimming pool water is regulated to protect the environment and public health. Here are some key points.

1. **Prohibited Dumping:** It is unlawful to dispose of swimming pool and spa water in way that could harm public or private property, or any body of water such as creeks, rivers, lakes, or ponds.
2. **Permitted Disposal:** Pool and spa water should be disposed of through the sanitary sewer system, if possible. This helps ensure that the water is treated properly before being released into the environment.
3. **Chemicals Considerations:** Before discharging pool or spa water, it's important to ensure that the water is free of harmful chemicals. This typically involves dechlorinating the water and ensuring that pH levels are neutral.
4. **Local Regulations:** Always check with local authorities or the Arkansas Department of Health for guidelines and permits that may be required for disposing of pool and spa water.

**NO! STREET OR GUTTER**

- Do not discharge chlorinated or saline pool or spa water into the street or gutter because this water drains into the creeks, lakes, ponds, and rivers.
- Remember to dispose of unwanted pool and spa chemicals as household hazardous waste.

**NO! SANITARY SEWER**

· Never drain pool or spa water into a septic tank system.

· Never drain pool or spa water to the sanitary sewer until the water has been de-chlorinated and pH adjusted.

· Always contact the City of Brookland with the amount of gallons of water you will be dumping into the sanitary sewer.

## **YES! YOUR YARD**

· Drain you pool or spa water to your vegetated landscape, lawn or rocky areas on your property that allow the water to percolate into the ground.

· Salt or saline pool or spa water contains higher concentrations of salts that can be more damaging to plants and soils. Consider locations or discharge as some plants are more salt-tolerant than others.

· Remember to move the drain hose frequently.

· Be sure the pool or spa water does not flow onto your neighbor's property or collect in any areas that may attract mosquitoes.

· Where it is not possible to discharge the pool or spa water to the ground with impacting your neighbor's property, a professional pool-draining service must be hired to collect all water for off-site disposal at an approved location.

### **Guidelines for DE-Chlorinating Swimming Pools and Spas And Discharging Filter Backwash To de-chlorinate residential**

### **swimming pools, hot tub, spa or fountain water:**

1. Once the chlorination system has been shut off or chlorine has stopped being added to the water, keep the water in the pool/spa/fountain for 7-10 days to allow the chlorine to naturally evaporate in the sunlight.

De-chlorination additives can also be purchase at your pool supply store and can be used to speed up the de-chlorination process.

2. Use a test kit to measure the chlorine level and pH in the water. Most pool owners use a pH and chlorine test kit to maintain the quality of the pool water, but if you do not have one, you can purchase an expensive one at the local pool supply store.

**The water should not show any detectable levels of chlorine, and the pH should be neutral between 6.5 and 8.5.** You may need to let the water site longer to achieve the chlorine and pH levels required before discharging the water.

3. After water is de-chlorinated, you may discharge the water under the following conditions:

· Avoid creating conditions that cause street or property flooding or ponding water

· Avoid discharging when it is raining, in order to prevent the storm drainage system from becoming overloaded.

**Remember, only DE-CHLORINATED swimming pool/hot tub/spa/fountain water is allowed to be**

**discharged into the environment.**

### **To discharge residential swimming pool filter backwash:**

1. Water from backwashing pool filters **shall not** be discharged to the street or storm drainage system.

2. Backwash must be contained on the property. Use it to water grass or any area on you property that will allow water to percolated into the ground.

3. Hire a contractor to pump the pool water into a truck to be hauled offsite. Check the internet for septic disposal companies for this service.

### **Additional Precautions:**

**Pool water may contain copper** from chemicals used in the pool to prevent the growth of algae. Since copper can be harmful to fish and wildlife, your local pool supply store can help you determine the best chemicals to add to the pool to neutralize or remove metals from the water before discharging.

**Properly store pool and spa chemicals** to prevent leaks and spills. Store them in an area that is properly covered to avoid exposure to rain or vandalism.

**Thank you for your cooperation in keeping the City's streams, creeks, ponds, lakes, and rivers clean and healthy!**