

POSITIVELY PECULIAR

February, March and April, 2011 Issue



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MARK YOUR CALENDAR . . .

**Election Day
April 5, 2011**



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FROM THE MAYOR

If you have lived in Peculiar for more than five years, you know very well what a growing town looks like. You also know some of the good and bad that goes along with growth. Any City Planner will tell you “controlled growth” is a good thing overall, and if you’re not growing (at least a little) your city is probably in some stage of decline. Since 2004 we have certainly not been in decline.

One of the biggest challenges of growth is making sure adequate streets and utilities are available to serve it. For the most part, our infrastructure has performed well in serving our new homes and businesses. For areas where it needs help, the City Staff and Board of Aldermen maintain a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) to prioritize projects. We also require that developers contribute funds toward projects. As I write to you today, our greatest need infrastructure-wise is upgrading our sanitary sewer system. We are now taking steps toward this upgrade.

The City’s growth is only partly responsible for this need. All sewer systems need upgrading from time to time due to age, changing technology and changing State regulations. Ours is no different. Portions of our system are nearing capacity and others need repair. We have had engineers study the system to pinpoint its shortcomings, but a simpler test has been to observe the system during major storm events. As our system ages, rainfall runoff and groundwater find ways to enter the system. Engineers refer to this common problem as “inflow and infiltration” or simply “I & I”. The I & I has allowed the City Staff to see first-hand where the system is nearing capacity. The project we have laid out will attack the problems for multiple angles to ensure that we have a sewer system that performs well, provides for new connections and always meets State requirements. Over the coming months you may see the engineering company we hired, George Butler Associates, performing their tasks around town.

Of course the project comes with a price. We intend to upgrade the sewage treatment plant, upgrade certain pump stations, construct new pipelines and reduce the “I & I”. We have been told by our engineers that we should expect the project to cost about \$2.8 million. A project of this size must be financed through the sale of bonds, with the City making payments to retire the bonds over time. The money to make these payments must be collected from the people that benefit from using the sewer system: our existing and future customers.

For this reason, I must inform you that all users of the system will see an increase in their monthly sewer bill sometime this year. As of today, the exact increase is unknown because the bonds have not been sold. Our best estimate is that each sewer customer will see an increase of about \$12.00 per month. We realize that sewer bills at this level will be burdensome for many of our customers. However, the risks of not doing the project are simply too great. If our system were to fail, we could face steep fines from the State of Missouri and other agencies for any environmental damage. We could also reach a point where a moratorium would have to be placed on the building of new homes and businesses. This would not be good for the growth of Peculiar.

Please understand that I and your Board of Aldermen have spent years wrestling with this sewer issue and we take no pleasure in having to bring you this news. We ask for your understanding of the situation, and we offer our time to answer questions that you may have. The City Staff is also available weekdays from 8:00 to 5:00 to discuss the specifics of the project. There’s only so much that can be explained in this one-page commentary. Thank you very much for your attention, and please know that these actions we are taking are for the good of Peculiar present and future.

Ernie Jungmeyer, Mayor

FROM THE DESK OF THE CITY ADMINISTRATOR

As the City Administrator, I would like to thank our Public Works employees that worked hours on end to keep the streets clear from the recent blizzard. I think they did a great job considering that larger cities around the region were still trying to get to streets when our guys had hit all streets at least once. The priority of the streets being cleared is first the most traveled streets, side streets, neighborhood streets, then cul-de-sacs. If you have problems in your area with snow, please feel free to call 779-5212, ext. 224.

Due to this year's worse than expected winter, the City's budget for winter and summer supplies (included under the same line item) are greater than expected and may need to be adjusted. This process involves a budget amendment and the Board of Alderman ("Board") will review the City's budget in May again to see if necessary amendments are warranted. Moreover, the City of Peculiar declared a state of emergency during the blizzard to allow street crews to do what was needed to keep the streets clear. This, in addition, allows the City to seek any reimbursement from the Federal Government, if it is provided. As of the date of this letter, the President has not signed any order allowing for reimbursement for the winter storm supplies.

The City has a Facebook page and updates the site often. If you have any comments for the City, there is a place to comment on the City's page. The City's website, www.cityofpeculiar.com is always an excellent resource of information. Flying J will be opening a Denny's in their existing restaurant location. Pat's Restaurant is under new ownership and the new establishment is called Tony's Iron Skillet. Meadow View Estates senior housing development, next to Country Mart, is hoping to be completed by May,, 2011. There will be 34 units for residents of age 55 and older. Currently there are over 40 on the leasing list.

As written by the Mayor, the Board of Aldermen made the tough decision to issue \$3,125,000 in bonds for sewer repairs. It was a difficult decision, as no one wants to raise any rates in the current economy. However, the studies recommend that the Board act quickly on the failing areas of the system. As difficult as this decision was for the Board of Aldermen, these problems are a result of actions and decisions made by the City years ago from 2002 to 2006. In 2011, the current administration made the difficult decision to issue the bonds and to start addressing the problematic system.

If you are a Landlord or live in an area with concerns about someone tampering with your water meter, please feel free to call the Utility Clerk at 816.779.5212, ext. 222 and inquire about getting a locked meter. The cost for the lock meter must be prepaid; however, it gives you an option to secure your meter.

I hope you had a wonderful time through the Holidays and if you are like me, we are looking forward to the Spring season.

Respectfully,, Brad Ratliff

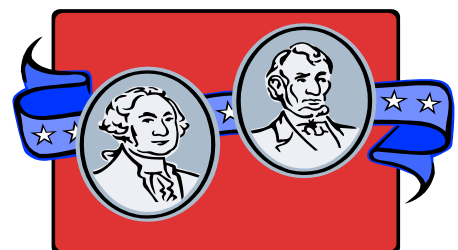


Municipal Court News

The City of Peculiar Municipal Court is pleased to announce the convenience of paying your citation online or by phone for a minimal charge by the online company.

Go to www.TrafficPayment.com or call 1-800-444-1187. All that is needed is the citation number, name of defendant and the amount due. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the Court at 816-779-5104.

City Offices will be closed on Monday, February 21st in observance of President's





NEWS FROM MAYOR JUNGMEYER

First, a few comments on utility bills. I have received numerous complaints from residents that they did not receive their bill. This resulted in a few water shut-offs because the City did not receive payment. I want to advise you that the City is NOT responsible for delivery of your bill by the US Postal Service. Bills are usually mailed by the first day of the month. If you do not receive your bill by the 6th, please call the Water Dept. and they will give you the amount due. Payment is due by the 15th and a late charge of 15% is assessed if payment is not made on time. If payment is not received by 9:00 a.m. on the 23rd, your water will be shut-off. A \$50 administrative fee must be paid along with your bill to get your water turned back on. If you have a financial problem and cannot pay your bill in full by the 15th, please notify Nick at the Water Dept. (ext. 222). I can possibly work with you on payment arrangements and keep your water from being turned off on the 23rd. No alternate payment arrangements will be made after the 20th. The City of Peculiar does not want to see anyone have their water shut-off.

We have experienced two major snow events so far this winter season. We have experienced two major snow events so far this winter season. I feel that the street department has done a good job of snow removal. We are striving to have the best snow removal of any city in Cass County. If you have any complaints on snow removal or any suggestions, please notify me or the City Administrator. All complaints on this or any subjects will be responded to.

The city staff have been exploring all available sources of grants for infrastructure improvements. The amount of funds available are shrinking and in some cases disappearing. Some improvements have to be made and our sanitary sewer system is in the most need. See my article on the front page of this newsletter concerning a future sanitary sewer project and the costs. I hope this project will take care of our wastewater needs for quite a few years.

Mayor's Thought For The Day--The truth of the matter is that you always know the right thing to do. The hard part is doing it. (Norman Schwarzkopf)



April 5, 2011 Election Candidates

Ward 1 Alderman - 2 Year Term

Veronika A. Ray
Steven E. Smith

Ward 2 Alderman - 2 Year Term

Holly J. Stark - Incumbent
Kimberly A. Mallinson
Jeffrey M. Harlan

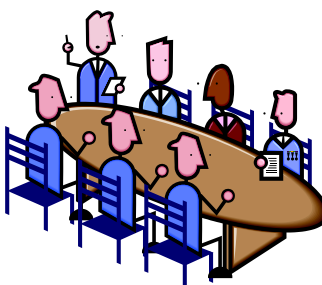
Ward 3 Alderman - 2 Year Term

Robert M. Fines - Incumbent
Paul M. Kingery
Kristina A. Vassar

Notice to the Public

Effective with the March meetings, there will be a change in the format for the City's Board of Aldermen meetings. The meeting date has been changed from 1st and 3rd Tuesdays to 1st and 3rd Mondays.

The 1st Monday of each month the meeting will be a Work Session only. This meeting will begin at 6:00 p.m. The 3rd Monday of the month will be the regular Board of Aldermen meeting and this meeting will start at 6:30 p.m. All meetings are open to the public.



Meetings will continue to be video taped and these videos can be viewed daily at 1:00 pm on Channel 7. Minutes will be available for viewing, once approved by the Board, on the



CITY MEETINGS

Board of Alderman
1st & 3rd Monday
Each Month

Planning & Zoning
Commission
2nd Thursday
Each Month

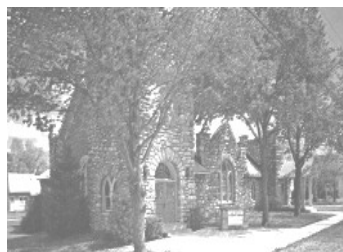
Park Board
2nd Monday
Each Month



All meetings are held at City Hall in the Council Chambers & are open to the public. City Hall is located at 600 Schug Avenue.

Effective March, the Work Session and Board of Aldermen meetings will be videotaped. These video tapes will be aired daily on Channel 7 at approx. 1:00 p.m.

Minutes from the Board of Aldermen meetings may be viewed on the City Website at www.cityofpeculiar.com



CORNERSTONE CHAPEL & FRIENDSHIP HALL

Located at West Center & First Street

Available for Rentals
Weddings
Receptions
Meetings
Special Events

For rental information
Contact Deadra at
779-5212 Ext 221

A REMINDER FROM THE CODES DEPARTMENT . . .

Winter is upon us and the Codes Department would like to remind everyone about the importance of keeping your property and residence free from the accumulation of rubbish (trash). Rubbish is defined by the property maintenance code as “combustible and non-combustible waste materials except garbage: including materials like paper, rags, boxes, rubber, leather, tires, tree branches...etc.” The accumulation of rubbish is not only unsightly, but it can also be a hazard by providing refuge for rodents and also hindering emergency personnel access or blocking egress in an emergency situation. Please help keep Peculiar safe by limiting the amount of rubbish you keep on your property and ensuring your home has adequate egress for an emergency and help keep our neighborhoods

The Codes Department would like to remind property owners of their obligation to comply with the adopted property maintenance code in relation to vehicles. Section 302.8 states, “No inoperative or unlicensed motor vehicle shall be parked, kept or stored on any premises, and no vehicle shall at any times be in a state of major disassembly, disrepair or in the process of being stripped or dismantled.” Please ensure all of your vehicles are currently licensed and are not undergoing major repairs at your residence. The Codes Department will be looking for violations and appreciates your cooperation to help keep Peculiar beautiful.

HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE (HHW) DISPOSAL

Peculiar no longer participates in the MARC Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection program. The yearly membership fee was about \$4,000 and it was eliminated during past budget cuts. **However, Peculiar now offers individual assistance to city residents that wish to take their HHW items to an authorized collection facility.**

There is a year-round HHW facility in Lee’s Summit at their “Resource Recovery Park”, 2101 SE Hamblen Rd. Call 816-969-1805 to make an appt. to drop off items. You may drop off a maximum of 100 lbs. of material per appointment (Note: one full gallon of paint weighs about 10 lbs). You will be charged \$50 for the drop off, and each household may have only one appt. per day. Go to www.cityofls.net for more information. There are also some mobile collection events in Cass County each year (call 816-474-8326 or go to recyclespot.org). You will be charged \$75 to drop off HHW items at the mobile events.

On October 1, 2010 (on a first come, first serve basis) Peculiar began reimbursing residents a maximum of \$50 per year toward these fees. An original receipt and proof of residency are required for reimbursement. Contact Bob O’Brien, City Engineer at 816-779-5212, X228 if you are interested in this program.

Some typical HHW items that are accepted are motor oil, fuel, lawn & garden products, paint, pesticides, antifreeze and batteries. There is much more information on HHW and recycling at recyclespot.org.