



# Nichols Hills E-News

October 2011

## CITY NEWS

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### Upcoming Meetings

- Planning Commission  
November 1st  
5:30 pm at City Hall
- City Council Meeting  
November 8th  
5:30 pm at City Hall
- Regular Meeting of Municipal Authority  
November 8th  
5:45 pm at City Hall
- Board of Adjustment  
November 16th  
5:30 pm at City Hall
- Environmental, Health & Sustainability Committee  
November 16th  
8:30 am at City Hall

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The City of Nichols Hills experienced great loss in September. On September 1st Public Works Director Charles Hooper passed away. Twenty days later, on September 21st, Fire Chief Keith Bryan passed away. Both of these men were dedicated to making Nichols Hills a wonderful place to live. They had each served at Nichols Hills for over thirty years, and had made their way up through the ranks to serve as the head of their respective departments. Both Charles and Keith will be terribly missed.

We would like to thank the community for the tremendous support we have received. We are both humbled and grateful at the response. Our heartfelt thanks to everyone who brought food, sent cards, expressed support to a city employee, or sent a donation to the memorial funds. Both Charles and Keith were very proud of this city, and we all share their pride.

## FIRE DEPARTMENT

### **Where Are We Now?**

As most of you probably know on 09/20/2011 the Fire Chief of the Nichols Hills Fire Department was suddenly killed. Many people have asked us what effect this has had on the operation of the Nichols Hills Fire Department and the short answer is it has had a significant effect. We usually don't go into much detail about what that entails but in this article I will.

In effect it left four holes that must be filled and it takes 30-60 days to fill those holes and we are short handed while that process is taking place. First, the Fire Chief position must be filled. Our City Manager makes that decision and appointed me within a week so that hole was filled quickly and easily. Second, as the Fire Chief it is my responsibility to appoint a Deputy Chief and I made that decision in about two weeks and named Sergeant Rick Rosecrans as our Deputy Chief so that decision was relatively quick but now comes the more difficult and time consuming process. Third, we have to fill Rick's vacant Sergeant position and fourth, hire a new fire fighter to replace the one promoted to Sergeant.

The Sergeant position is filled by giving a written and practical test to all the eligible fire fighters who wish to test for the promotion. We give them at least 30 days to study and prepare and it takes us almost that long to write the exam and develop the practical scenarios they must take. The practical scenarios are timed exercises that are done in front of three assessors who grade each candidate on their decision making and presentation skills. So in addition to writing and developing the entire test we have to set dates and arrange to have assessors here for the practical part of the test. The assessors are from other area fire departments and must be equal or higher in rank than the position being tested for. The actual testing process from start to finish lasts three days and is a grueling process for the candidates. The fire fighter who finishes at the top has most definitely earned the promotion.

The hiring process also takes a minimum of 30 days. We do not have an open application process which means we do not accept applications from anybody who wishes to apply. The reason for this is there are State requirements each applicant must meet to be accepted in the pension system and it is very difficult to put applicants through all the physical tests they must pass to meet those requirements. Eastern Oklahoma County Technology Center (EOC) has developed a testing process that meets all the requirements and

## FIRE DEPARTMENT

is open to anyone who wishes to take the test. Therefore we get a list of candidates from EOC who have passed the test and invite them to apply. We then set up interviews with the top 20 candidates and the interview board picks the top three to five and finally the Fire Chief interviews those and picks one who is offered the job. Once a candidate is chosen and accepts the job it takes another 14-30 days to get them on the job.

Once we get a new fire fighter on the job his/her training starts and it takes two to three months just to get them to a minimum performance level so other fire fighters on their shift can take time off. We have four fire fighters per shift and only one can be off at a time so we have a minimum of three on duty. This adds to the urgency of getting the new fire fighter trained but the importance of having well trained fire fighters far exceeds the importance of taking vacation time. Our fire fighters understand this so they are very patient and work hard at providing quality training for all new fire fighters.

Normally we know when one of our veteran fire fighters is retiring and we do all of this in advance of his/her retirement date and have new people ready to step in and fill those holes. The unexpectedness of Keith's passing means we were way behind and under stress when we started the process. One person could not possibly do all of this in a timely manner so I have delegated many of the components for the two processes to some of my officers who in turn have enlisted the help of some of our fire fighters. I am fortunate to have many experienced people here who are quality professionals and are eager to help and doing a great job at their assigned duties. We will have all these holes filled by the end of November and then we will be well on our way to getting back to normal.

Terry Hamilton, Fire Chief  
Nichols Hills Fire Department

## PUBLIC WORKS

It must be a sign of aging. Sixty days ago we wanted it to cool down a little. In retrospect maybe warmer is better. Not really; this cooler weather is great. The street department can now start back on crack sealing. Please watch out for them so they can guide you around anything wet or sticky. They are starting in the southwest part of town.

Our contractors (Atlas Paving) have completed half of the 1700 and 1800 block Dorchester Place. After that half cures out, Atlas will start on the other half. It should not be long. I bet it seems like a long wait if you live in the area. The waterline replacement on Camden should be completed in the first week on November. Atlas can start replacing the 1600 block of Camden after the water line is moved. You will be notified when that time gets closer.

Blastco turned in the low bid on painting our south water storage tank. They will be starting on the tank soon. Our storage tanks are expensive to maintain. However, we could not operate without them during the high water demands of summer. We feel we have a good price and a good contractor.

EPA and DEQ came to Nichols Hills to perform a "Stormwater Audit" on our federally mandated stormwater program. We seem to be ahead of the curve in a lot of areas. The program deals with construction sites, hazardous wastes, rivers and streams, industry, etc. Not all of the stormwater program applies to Nichols Hills, but the parts that do, EPA is getting very serious about. As the new rules come down from EPA we will have more on our Stormwater Program.

Our wells, water, sewer and sanitation departments seem to have landed on their feet after a very hard summer and even worse September. If you have any problems we help with please call 843-5222.

In closing, after the lost of Charles Hooper, a good person and a good friend to all in Nichols Hills, Parks Inc. established a fund to receive donations to install a park bench in memory of Charles. Donations can be dropped off at city hall C/O Parks Inc. memo Charles Hooper. Anything will help and will be appreciated.

Have a fun Halloween and Happy Thanksgiving and enjoy the cooler weather.

# POLICE DEPARTMENT

## Nationwide Emergency Alert System (EAS) Test - November 9, 2011

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and the National Weather Service (NWS) will conduct the first-ever national-level test of the Emergency Alert System (EAS). The test will take place **Wednesday, November 9, 2011 at 1:00 PM CST. The test may be up to three and a half minutes in length.**

This test is similar to the way local emergency alert system tests are conducted; **HOWEVER** this will be the first nationwide test that is expected to be broadcast **simultaneously** over all communication service providers: television stations (including digital television, cable, satellite audio and television services) and broadcast radio stations across the U.S. and several U.S. territories. This nationwide wide EAS Test will help determine the reliability of the system and its effectiveness in notifying the public of emergencies and potential dangers nationally and regionally.

### WHAT PEOPLE WILL HEAR AND SEE DURING THE TEST:

This national test may look like regular local EAS tests that most people are already familiar with, but there will be some differences in what viewers will see and hear. The audio message will repeat "This is a test." The video message scroll may not indicate "This is a test." The message will last for approximately three minutes and then regular programming will resume.

### KEY MESSAGES for the Public 9-1-1 Facts Concerning Nationwide EAS Test

- ◆ The public is reminded this broadcast is only a TEST.
- ◆ Calls to 9-1-1 to inquire about the test are considered non-emergency calls. These types of calls may overwhelm the telephone network at emergency call centers and delay 9-1-1 from receiving calls from citizens reporting real emergencies. Please help us ensure that callers with actual emergencies can get through to 9-1-1.
- ◆ **Only call 9-1-1 if you have an actual emergency** requiring a response from police, fire or emergency medical services (EMS).
- ◆ Calls to 9-1-1 to get information about this test should not be made. For more information go to <http://transition.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/eas.pdf>

## POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Police Department would like you to join us in welcoming three new officers!



Officer James McGinley is a graduate of Oklahoma State University, and worked for DHS before starting a career in law enforcement with the Nichols Hills Police Department.



Officer David Eischeid was an officer with the Piedmont Police Department for three years before joining the Nichols Hills Police Dept.



Officer Ella Hall was employed by the Oklahoma County Sheriff's Department in communications before starting her career as a law enforcement officer with Nichols Hills.

## ANIMAL RESCUE FRIENDS

If anyone wants to assist ARF in it's mission of saving unclaimed, impounded pets in Nichols Hills, they can donate time, old collars, leashes, crates, dog beds, food, treats, toys and, of course, money by mailing checks to Animal Rescue Friends, Inc of Nichols Hills, C/O Public Works, 1009 N.W. 75th Street, Nichols Hills, OK 73116 or by calling 843-4222 about donating items. ARF will respond by sending a 501 c 3 tax deduction letter (and offering a cat or a dog!).

### OCTOBER'S FEATURED PET



Becky is an energetic young (probably about 10-11 months old) kitty who needs a special forever home. Earlier this year, Becky was trapped, spayed, and ear-tipped because she was determined to be unadoptable. She was released and has been fending for herself since that time. Now Becky has decided that some humans are really not that bad. She is still learning her manners, but loves to be held and have her chin scratched. She has the most wonderful purr and loves to snuggle. Becky needs an indoor only home with an experienced cat owner who will be patient with her and love her. She is spayed, up-to-date on her shots, and has tested negative for FIV & FeLeuk.