



Mayor's Letter

October 15, 2016

Hello Everyone,

THE HALLOWEEN HAYRIDE IS A LAKEWOOD VILLAGE TRADITION. This year we will have five trailers (one more than last year), with one trailer dedicated to our smallest trick-or-treaters. The date is October 31st (yes, on Monday), the place is Town Hall and the trailers hit the road at 6:15. Don't be late.

WOODCREST DRIVE NOW HAS FEWER HOUSES. After three long years, four red-tags, and one demolition order, the Town acquired and then demolished the house at 665 Woodcrest. Last month we closed on the property, which we purchased for \$3,643, which included the bank paying all of the Town's liens on the property.



As a general rule, the Town is not in the business of buying and tearing down houses. However, this house was unrepairable. The foundation had failed, with almost **eight inches** difference between the living room and the outside walls. In addition, there was fire damage, the house had been vandalized, the sewer line had collapsed, and it did not meet current zoning requirements. After walking the house with Wells Fargo's attorneys, we concluded that it was not financially feasible to spend the money bringing the house up to our current codes so that it could be sold and occupied. Let me emphasize an important point. The Town Council did not issue the demolition order because the house was ugly, or because we wanted more green space. We have an obligation not only our current residents, **but also to our future neighbors**. The house was never going to be right, and it is terrible to think of a young family buying their first home walking into that mess after it had been cosmetically "repaired". Prior to demolition, we removed the metal so that it could be recycled, and we hauled off the slab and driveway to the concrete plant to be crushed and recycled for road base. Surprisingly, we discovered a large colony of honeybees when we knocked down a section of the back wall. We called in the bee experts Sheri and Scott Garcia, who were able to rescue the bees and move them to a new home in Sunrise Bay. I am very pleased that we were able to accomplish a safe demolition in the most environmentally responsible way possible.

THE INITIAL ROAD REHABILITATION on Melody and Carrie Lane is complete. The Town requested several bids and two paving companies came out and marked the streets where they recommended repairs. We required

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the bidders to mark exactly what we would get our money, to minimize any misunderstandings once the work was underway. These options were the “pink” markings and the “orange” markings. The two options differed in the type of patches – the pink option had a greater number of smaller, shallower patches, while the “orange” option had fewer areas but more larger full width replacements (rather than just the edges). The Town council approved the “orange option” and allocated \$25,000 for the project. Councilman Gary Newsome and Mayor Pro-tem Ed Reed observed the work as it progressed. The work was completed on schedule last month with the \$25,000 payment coming from our dedicated road maintenance fund. Obviously, we do not have the funds available to repave every street, everywhere there is an issue, **we have to prioritize**. As we replenish our road maintenance fund, later this year we will evaluate the next maintenance areas to address.

PUBLIC WORKS. The large excavator has been busy – besides the Woodcrest demo work, we have recently completed a large sewer repair along Highridge, and are beginning a complex project on Peninsula. As you may have noticed, what used to be four empty lots back-to-back on Hillside/Peninsula is now being developed. As a result, we must make some long-delayed, critical sewer repairs. At the same time, we have begun working on replacing the hideous awful looking 36-inch culvert “drainage pipe” located on Peninsula. The Town has a drainage easement between the properties there, and we are going to fix this eyesore. We are re-engineering the area with new improved steel pipes, resetting the grade to drain properly, and installing underground pipes with junction boxes to improve the aesthetics. The concrete streets look great, and we want to continue the



momentum and keep improving the look of the Town. You're all doing a great job keeping things looking nice and we're going to do our part.

Along those lines, I've had several people ask me about our “new” public works trucks. They do look great, but the trucks are owned by Sam Morgan. Sam provides excellent service to the town maintaining our water and sewer infrastructure. The signs on the trucks let citizens know the workers you see are taking care of town business. This is especially important when we are responding to an emergency in the middle of the night. We have also ordered “LWV Building Inspections” signs as well for our inspector's vehicles.



I'm proud to live in Lakewood Village, it's a great place. We want to continue to improve our visibility and promote our brand identity – we're the **TOWN** of Lakewood Village – not a subdivision in Little Elm. That's why I put in the banners along the front entrance. I also want everyone to see the work that we are doing to improve the community and reinvest your tax dollars.

OTHER IMPORTANT ISSUES

FIRE SAFETY INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS. Last month we finished the installation of fire hydrants on Hillside Drive. This is part of a continuing project begun three years ago to invest in public safety and bring our fire fighting capabilities up to modern standards. The planning was begun prior to the concrete road project, since we wouldn't be able to lay any new mains once the streets were complete. In the first phase, we replaced the two-inch water line on Lakecrest with a new six-inch main and installed four new hydrants. The Hillside phase required new valves and additional plumbing from the water plant, but the existing main was sufficient to support the four new hydrants. We are now working on the engineering for Peninsula and Parkwood. I applaud the Council's continuing commitment to the project and I think it's outstanding that we have increased the number of hydrants in the original part of town from three to 11. As I have said, LWV is a great investment and we're investing right along with you.

NUISANCE ORDINANCE AND BULK TRASH - In September, the Town Council amended the Nuisance Ordinance to address the issue of the placement of bulk trash. Under our garbage contract with Allied, **we have bulk trash every other month, in the odd months.** In contrast, Oak Point has bulk pickup every month. However, in OP, the amount allowed is much smaller and if you exceed it, you have to pay extra. In LWV, we have pickups less often, but the amount you can discard is much much greater, and, we only "trash" our streets six times a year. The new problem we faced was that recently people started placing mattresses, furniture, and televisions out at the curb even though bulk trash was not for **five or six more weeks.** The town right-of-way was becoming an obstacle course, the garbage was just piling up, and we were seeing it spread to more and more houses. Remember, the first 19 feet of grass includes the shoulder on the road (which is supposed to be drivable), the bar-ditch, and the Town's water and sewer utility corridor. With more and more children in town and people out walking along our streets, it becomes a safety issue when we place large items along the road, which both distracts and restricts drivers.

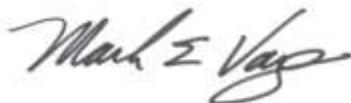
To address the issue the Town Council has adopted the following amendment to the Town's Nuisance ordinance. You cannot put your bulk trash out at the curb more than 10 days (two weekends) before the scheduled bulk trash collection day. So for example, our next bulk trash pickup is on Tuesday November 1st. The earliest you can put out bulk trash is Saturday October 22nd. Thus, you have two weekends to do any housecleaning or tree trimming and move them to the curb. I think this is a very reasonable solution – enough time for you to plan ahead while improving public safety.

ELECTION INFORMATION. Early voting starts on October 24th and runs through November 4th. You can early vote at any polling place in Denton County. Our nearest polling places are the Little Elm Library/Town Hall and the Copeland Government Center on US 380 in Cross Roads. **On Election Day, November 8th, Lakewood Village residents may only vote at the Oak Point Community Center on Naylor Road.** You cannot vote in Little Elm or Cross Roads on Election Day! And don't forget to take a photo ID.

Let's all have a safe, high-sugar-content Halloween and please be aware as you drive through the village. In addition, please have patience and respect the hard work that our public works people are doing. We don't have the ability to close entire roads, put up big flashing arrows and have flagmen strategically positioned.

Lakewood Village is a great place to be and all of us are making it a little bit better every day.

Dr. Mark E. Vargus
Mayor



(cell) 214-558-6947
Mark@lakewoodvillagetx.us