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**September – October 2023**

# *City* Newsletter

*Informing, educating, and engaging residents of Versailles and Woodford County, Kentucky*

## Versailles Police Department Reports Fewer Crimes over Last Fiscal Year

The Versailles Police Department recently released its FY 2023 Annual Report. (FY stands for ‘fiscal year,’ which is the period from July 1 to June 30. FY 2023 is July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023.) During this fiscal year, the VPD responded to 26,642 calls for service, completed more than 2,200 traffic stops, wrote more than 1,330 citations, and made 535 arrests. The stats below tell part of a hopeful story – crime in most categories is the same or down from the previous FY. The VPD implements community-oriented policing to make our community a safer and better place to live and work. More on some of those programs in the next issue of the newsletter!

Crime Categories as follows:	Fiscal Year 2022	Fiscal Year 2023
Murder	0	0
Conspiracy to Commit Murder	0	0
Rape	4	5
Robbery	3	1
Aggravated Assault	26	22
Arson	1	2
Burglary	46	46
Auto Theft	28	29
Theft	213	218
All Other Offenses*	1449	1086
<b>Total</b>	<b>1770</b>	<b>1409</b>

\*Other arrestable offenses include, but are not limited to, DUI, alcohol intoxication, criminal trespass, some drug offenses, domestic violence-related crimes, etc.

### More Car Ashtrays Available September 5 at City Hall!

Thanks to continuing support from Bluegrass Greensource, the City of Versailles has received BGG’s last box of plastic car ashtrays for distribution to residents. There are about 200 available to distribute. They are free and popular, so please take only what you’ll use. Ashtrays fit in a car’s drink holder and have a small metal tray at the bottom to collect ash. Don’t throw those butts out the window!

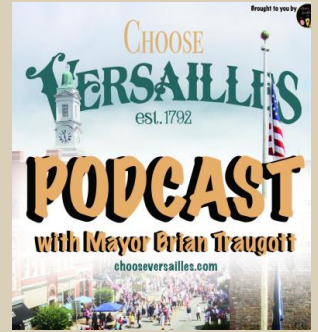


good things happening in the community >>>

## A New Podcast with the Mayor!

Mayor Traugott joked that the new podcast is the most popular podcast at Versailles City Hall, so we're trying to get the word out about this podcast that showcases the "behind the scenes" view and inner workings of Versailles City Government. The mayor is the host of the podcast, which has two shows under its belt – the first on why the name "Choose Versailles" was chosen and the second on code enforcement, including an interview with Code Enforcement Officer Rock Vance.

The podcast will air twice a month on the day following city council meetings (which are the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of each month). It will be available on FB and on the city's website.



## New City Website Coming Soon!

The City of Versailles will launch a new website in early September. You can find it now at <https://versailles.klc.org> but note that there are numerous items that need to be updated before we "officially" go live. If you type in the current website address (<https://versailles.ky.com>), you will not be redirected to the new site until it's officially live.

We think you'll like the difference between the old and new website. In general, it should be more user-friendly. Some new features:

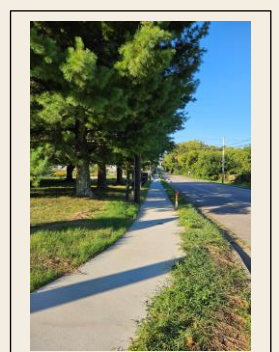
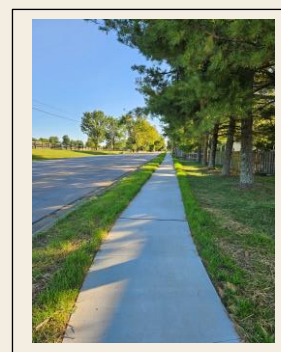
- City's Facebook page embedded on the site;
- Fillable forms (like the Business Registration form) that can be submitted electronically;
- Online bill pay that is easier to navigate;
- Home page with easy links to bid announcements, grant opportunities, public service announcements; past and present issues of the city newsletter, etc.



## High Street Sidewalk is Complete!

The 4,680-foot-long sidewalk on the east side of High Street between Minary Avenue and Falling Springs Blvd. is complete and looks great! The project, which was done by Excel Excavating out of Sellersburg, IN, was a joint project of the City of Versailles and the Woodford County Fiscal Court.

High Street is a busy road. With nowhere to walk except through people's yards or along the road edge, worries about traffic made exercise and walking to school problematic. With the new sidewalk, we hope pedestrians feel safer now along this stretch!



The sidewalk is so long it took three photos to get most of it!

# October 8-14 is Fire Prevention Week!

The National Fire Protection Association® (NFPA)'s – the official sponsor of Fire Prevention Week™ for more than 100 years – has announced **“Cooking safety starts with YOU! Pay attention to fire prevention!”** as its theme for this year's Fire Prevention Week, the oldest public health observance on record in the U.S. The Versailles Fire Department uses the entire month of October to teach the public about fire prevention. Firefighters visit many daycares and schools and even offer station tours. If you have questions or want to arrange a tour, you can reach them at 859-873-5829.

More about cooking safety...

According to the NFPA, cooking is the leading cause of home fires, with nearly half (49 percent) of all home fires involving cooking equipment; cooking is also the leading cause of home fire injuries. Unattended cooking is the leading cause of home cooking fires and related deaths. In addition, NFPA data shows that cooking is the only major cause of fire that resulted in more fires and fire deaths in 2014-2018 than in 1980-1984. Cooking safety messages that support this year's theme:

- Always keep a close eye on what you're cooking. For foods with longer cook times, such as those that are simmering or baking, set a timer to help monitor them carefully.
- Clear the cooking area of combustible items and keep anything that can burn, such as dish towels, oven mitts, food packaging, and paper towels.
- Turn pot handles toward the back of the stove. Keep a lid nearby when cooking. If a small grease fire starts, slide the lid over the pan and turn off the burner.
- Create a “kid and pet free zone” of at least three feet around the cooking area and anywhere else hot food or drink is prepared or carried.

To learn more about Fire Prevention Week and this year's theme, visit [www.fpw.org](http://www.fpw.org). Additional Fire Prevention Week resources for children, caregivers, and educators can be found at [www.sparky.org](http://www.sparky.org) and [www.sparkyschoolhouse.org](http://www.sparkyschoolhouse.org).



## Look What's New in Town!

The following “brick and mortar” businesses recently registered with the City of Versailles...



Dunkin'

Horse Country Bourbon

Rail Explorers Bluegrass LLC

Fast Food

Liquor Store

Railbike – Outdoor Adventure

516 Lexington Road

159 Yellow Jacket

175 Beasley Drive

## Upcoming City of Versailles Meetings and Events >>>

### Regular City Council Meetings (Everyone welcome)

1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays at 5:30 pm at the Versailles Municipal Building

- September 5<sup>th</sup>
- September 19<sup>th</sup>
- October 3<sup>rd</sup>
- October 17<sup>th</sup>

### Regular City Council Work Sessions (Everyone welcome)

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at 5:30 pm at the Versailles Municipal Building

- September 12<sup>th</sup>
- October 10<sup>th</sup>

### Holidays

- Labor Day, Monday, September 4 (city offices closed)

### Community Events (that are supported in part by the city)

- Twilight Festival, Saturday, September 23, 12-9 pm, Downtown Versailles

**City meetings, work sessions and committee meetings are open to the public. We welcome and encourage you to attend them. You do not have to sign in, say your name or speak, though if you wish to speak, you may do so during public comment (an agenda item at council meetings only).**



## Edgewood Farm Update

The *Woodford Sun* did a nice job updating the community on the purchase from the city of 118 acres of industrial land to TKC Distilling. TKC plans to build a distillery on the land, including a visitor center and four rickhouses. Previously, the city had received over \$650,000 in Kentucky Product Development Initiative (KPDI) funds to upgrade water and sanitary sewer infrastructure on the site, which lies behind Kroger and borders Crossfield Drive. Likely this was one of the deciding factors in TKC Distilling locating here.

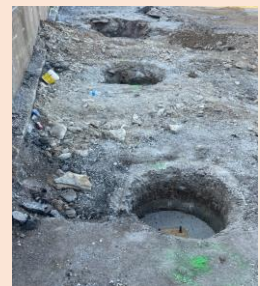
The City of Versailles still retains a 32-acre piece of industrial land next to the 118-acre parcel that sold. Its shape is reminiscent of the state of Idaho and includes access to rail at its narrowest point. The city will market this property for economic development. The remainder of the 336 acres that makes up the Edgewood property is zoned highway business, agricultural and professional office.



## *The Downtown Revitalization Project is progressing nicely!*

You've probably noticed some changes in the parking lot at the corner of Rose Hill Avenue and South Main Street since our last newsletter, in particular temporary fencing and some serious machines! Work has begun on the farmers' market pavilion, which will be located on the east side of the lot close to Rose Hill. Currently, footers are being dug to support this large structure. If you travel down Park Street, you'll see that the old pool / old police evidence room have been demolished and the hillside cleared. It's hard to imagine now, but near the steps that lead from the parking lot down to Big Spring Park (which will remain), there will be an ADA-compliant walkway that will lead down to the "water feature" that was and is the source of water for much of Woodford County's bourbon industry.

The City is especially proud that the Downtown Project will be fully accessible once completed. The area will be open to all, and persons with mobility and other challenges should find it welcoming and inviting. If you have specific questions about the project, please contact Downtown Revitalization Committee Chair Ken Kerkhoff at [k.kerkhoff@live.com](mailto:k.kerkhoff@live.com).



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## *A Green Ribbon?*

Just beyond the Nostalgia Station Toy Museum on Depot Street is a short stretch of land that runs under North Main Street between the Woodford County Health Department and the Versailles Police Department to the back of Settler's Cove Apartments on Spring Run near Big Spring Park. The land, owned by the City of Versailles, used to house a track for the Louisville and Nashville (L&N) Railroad. (The museum is in the railroad's former passenger station, which was built in 1911.) The track was pulled up in about 1937.

A large group of city officials, city staff and park board members recently took a walk through the old railroad line and envisioned its possibilities for recreation and connection to other parks. This is sometimes referred to as a "green ribbon" – an accessible, connected ribbon of neighborhood and community parks and trails. In this case, the trail would connect Lewis Walton and Big Spring Parks. While there are still many questions – Is the project feasible? How would it be funded? What safety features must be in place? How would the trail connect the parks? – it is fun to dream about the possibilities!



**Note:** The City of Versailles does not recommend people checking out the old line, especially alone. You are very unlikely to be seen or heard anywhere along the path – think steep rocky sides, traffic noise and lots of vegetation and tree cover – and there are numerous trip hazards, especially fallen limbs.

# From the Mayor

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The weather was very pleasant for the last week of August, but I see that steamy temperatures are in store as we move into September! Please don't overdo it outside and remember that your pets get hot, too.

### **Now, let's talk business...literally...**

A couple of questions I often see on local social media sites go something like this: "Why does the city allow there to be so many (fill in the blank) shops?" or "Why can't the city bring in a (fill in the name of your favorite store or restaurant)?"

The answer to the first question is "we don't." The answer to the second is a little more complicated because while the city (or the Economic Development Authority) can invite businesses to locate here, it is not within the city's power to make them come. As long as a business that wants to locate here is in the proper zone and meets Planning & Zoning requirements (which is more rigorous for new construction and renovations), the city has no say (unless the city owns the land).

Businesses do research into the community they want to expand in to determine if there is a market for their products/services, etc. So, if yet another (fill in the blank) shop comes to town, it's because the owners think they can make a go of it.

Finally, the city issues business licenses at city hall but it isn't more rigorous a process than this: the business owner or representative fills out a short form to register the business and submits it to the city clerk. There is no longer a fee and the only thing the business needs is a tax ID number. If the business is in good standing, it gets a license to operate. Simple as that!

## Happy Fall!

### **Want to get the city e-newsletter directly in your inbox?**

If you'd also like to get the newsletter sent directly to your inbox, please click the "Subscribe" button below or email City Clerk Elizabeth Reynolds at [ereynolds@versaillesky.com](mailto:ereynolds@versaillesky.com) with "Newsletter" in the subject line. The newsletter is completed around the first of every other month, so the next one will arrive on or about November 1. If you'd rather not get an email, the newsletter will be available on the city's Facebook page and on the city's website. Past issues are archived on the website also.



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