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Issue  
**THREE**

INFORMATION FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS OF VERSAILLES, KENTUCKY

May – June 2023

# *City* Newsletter

*A newsletter intended to inform, educate, and engage the residents of Versailles and Woodford County*

## *Do You Know...*

### ***A Citizen's Role in the Comprehensive Plan Process?***

Many citizens become familiar with the operations of the Planning & Zoning Commission only when an action is under consideration that directly affects where they live. At times, they make decisions that are the most controversial and garner headlines.

In reality, P&Z does more than rezone property. They are responsible for developing a document that, as required by state law, “serves as the guide for public and private actions and decisions to assure the development of public and private property in the most appropriate relationships.” This document, known as the Comprehensive Plan (or “Comp Plan”), is written to forecast a planning period covering 20 years and must be reviewed every five years. The Comprehensive Plan for Woodford County was last updated in 2018, meaning we are set to begin another review period.

The Goals & Objectives portion of the Comp Plan set the tone for the rest of the document, which will include a lot of updated demographic data, a transportation plan and a land-use plan. Public input is important throughout the process but is most critical in drafting the Goals & Objectives, which is the only part of the plan that

requires approval by the Fiscal Court and the City Councils. To that end, a series of public meetings have been conducted to allow residents to share with hired facilitators from the Kentucky League of Cities what they would like to see considered in the plan draft. Once the Goals & Objectives have been formally adopted, the Planning Commission will begin updating the various elements of the Comprehensive Plan, including, but not limited to, sections on Transportation, Community Facilities, and Land Use. Additional elements relating to Tourism, Economic Development, and Housing may be considered this time as well.

Please follow <https://woodfordplanning.org> to stay up to date as the process moves along this year. You can also reach out to the Mayor or City Council members with thoughts about what you think should be addressed in the Comp Plan.



good things happening in the community >>>

## Smart Water Meters Update!

Many of you will have already had your existing water meter switched out for a new “smart meter,” which we’ve written about in previous newsletters. At this writing, 66% of households that get their water from Versailles Municipal Utilities have the new meters with the remainder expected to be installed by the end of May. Some households may see an increase in their bills. Rest assured that the city did not increase water or sewer rates to pay for the new meters so unless you have a leak – which the smart meters will help identify in real time – modest increases are likely due to the improved accuracy of your new meter as your old meter may have slowed down over time.



**Smart Meter Cap**  
These are attached to existing water meter “plates” and are about ¾” tall. Be careful when you mow or weed eat!

### We’re all in this together -- help for residents in the community!

Woodford County has resources available to help residents who are struggling to make ends meet, including the Woodford County Food Pantry for the food insecure and the Blue Grass Community Action Partnership, which offers assistance with energy bills and other needs. In addition, some places of worship or faith-based organizations offer free or low-cost help to residents, including:

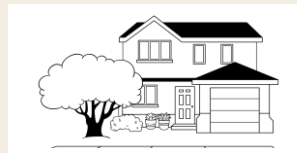
**Journey Provisions** (Journey Church), 560 Fielding Rd.: Excellent quality, gently used items up to 90% off retail, including clothing, baby/children’s items, cookware, books, home décor and more. Open Tuesday-Friday 10am-3pm and Saturday 10am-2pm. Call 859-873-7421 for more information.

**Community Household Pantry** (Versailles Presbyterian Church, 130 N Main St.: Free, non-food items like toiletries, paper products, and cleaning products. Every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month from 1-4 pm. Call 859-873-3491 for more information.

**Blessing Boxes** (Unity Outreach), various locations. See page 5 for full list.

If your place of worship offers low-cost or no cost assistance to the general community, please email Elizabeth Reynolds at [ereynolds@versaillesky.com](mailto:ereynolds@versaillesky.com) with the details, and we will add it to the next newsletter.

## Attention Woodford County Homeowners!



### Did you know that you could reduce your property tax bill if you are 65 years or older?

Woodford County, Versailles and Midway homeowners 65 years or older who own their own home that was their primary residence as of January 1, 2023, could qualify for the Homestead Exemption! The Kentucky Department of Revenue sets the exemption amount every two years and for 2023 and 2024, will reduce your taxable property value by \$46,350 – an increase of \$5,850 compared to the 2021 and 2022 exemption. **The Homestead Exemption will save you approximately \$460 on your property tax bill!**

The Property Valuation Office administers the program and has a short application for the homeowner to complete; all you need to bring is your driver’s license with the same property address listed. If you are turning 65 in 2023, you do not have to wait until your birthday to apply! You only need to apply once; you do not have to reapply unless you sell your house or move. The Woodford County PVA, John Paul Coyle, is happy to answer any questions you may have. Please stop by his office in Room 108 in the Courthouse to apply or contact him at 859-873-4101 or [JohnPaul.Coyle@ky.gov](mailto:JohnPaul.Coyle@ky.gov).

If you have been determined to be totally and permanently disabled by the Social Security Administration, the Kentucky Retirement System or Veterans Affairs and you own and reside in your Woodford County home as of January 1, you may also be eligible for the Homestead Exemption.



# Training is a Priority for the Versailles Fire Department!

The Versailles Fire Department takes pride in training regularly to provide the best service to its community. Career firefighters are required to maintain a minimum of 100 hours of fire-related continuing education annually, and volunteers and part-time firefighters 20 hours. This, of course, is in addition to the hours required to become certified in the first place. Last year, ten department members logged more than 400 hours each of fire training. Each year, the member with the most training hours wins the “Workhorse Award.” In 2022, Lt. Bryan Arnett won the award with 675 fire training hours!

Every first and third Monday of the month, Versailles Fire Department holds a training night for all staff at the training station on Hunteertown Road to stay fresh and learn new fire and rescue tactics. Here's an example: On April 17, the Versailles Fire Department received two vehicle donations to perform auto extrication training. Auto extrication is the process of freeing victims from the wreckage in motor vehicle accidents.

The on-duty crew spent most of the day setting up the two vehicles to simulate a real-life motor vehicle accident. When the training began at 6:30 pm, department members were told they were going to perform the simulation as if it were a real-life incident. The members were split into two crews; each crew had a different extrication task to complete. One used extrication tools (the “Jaws of Life”) to open a car with mangled doors; the other extricated a victim trapped between the ground and the vehicle by properly setting up rescue struts to stabilize the vehicle and keep it from rolling back over.

Once finished, the crews reset the props so that they could switch and perform the other incident. When the simulation was complete, they continued to learn all the ways to cut on a vehicle using both battery-powered and hydraulic tools. They learned to remove a victim trapped under the steering wheel (called “rolling the dash”) and to remove a roof. They even removed the trunk of a vehicle as if it were the only means of gaining access to the victim!

When the training was over, the members and instructors had a post-incident debriefing, just like after a real incident. They discussed everything that had happened, what could have been done differently, and what new tactics had been learned. No one ever wants to be in a motor vehicle accident but should the worse happen, Versailles Fire Department personnel are trained to work collaboratively, quickly, and effectively to save lives.



◀◀◀ Versailles Fire Department celebrated a “push-in” of its newest engine on Sunday, April 30! Engine 4 is a 2023 Pierce Enforcer Rescue Pumper. It seats four firefighters, has a 500 hp Cummins Diesel engine and a 1,500 gallon per minute pump. It can carry 750 gallons of water and over 2,000 feet of fire hose.

The rescue pumper offers more compartment space that allows the department to carry an assortment of tools while not compromising space needed for water, hoses, etc. This one piece of equipment is in service 24/7 and available to respond immediately to any hazmat, rescue, or fire suppression situation.

City National Bank

Dandelion Tales

Houston’s Diesel Repair LLC

Larry Stigers Equipment, Trailers & Trucks

Tacqueira Estrella

Vallozzi Versailles

Versailles Agri LLC

Bank

Retail

Auto Repair

Auto Sales

Food Truck

Restaurant

Retail

534 Marsailles Road

113 W. Green Street

183 Frankfort Street

176 Frankfort Street

Court Street

1978 Frankfort Street

Look What’s New in Town!

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

## Help us name our newsletter!

We've only gotten a handful of suggestions for the name of the city newsletter, and we'd like a few more to consider before we decide! **Email** your suggestion to City Clerk Elizabeth Reynolds at [ereynolds@versailles.ky.com](mailto:ereynolds@versailles.ky.com) with "Naming Contest" in the subject line. (One suggestion per person, please.) You will remain anonymous (except to Elizabeth) until a name is chosen. If necessary, City Council members will narrow down the list to a manageable number then we'll put the finalists out on the city's Facebook page and website for a community vote.

The winner will receive a \$25 #WoodfordWallet gift card and bragging rights!

Enter  
to Win



Woodford  
Wallet

## Police Department Update

The Versailles Police Department has two good things to tell you about! **Flock License Plate Readers** – Seventy percent of crimes involve one or more vehicles. Our recently-acquired Flock License Plate Readers have already led to a number of arrests, the recovery of stolen vehicles, and the recovery and safe return of endangered and missing juveniles. Flock License Plate Readers have raised some privacy concerns, but know that they are never used for traffic enforcement and do not take pictures of drivers or passengers. They read license plates only and flag vehicles suspected of being involved in a crime.

**Victim Advocate** – Newly-hired Victim Advocate, Ellie Castle, is already making a difference in Woodford County. The Victim Advocate offers assistance, support, and resources to crime victims and victims of other traumatic events. She also helps victims navigate the criminal justice system, which can be overwhelming, and is available to answer questions day or night. The Victim Advocate provides information on crime victim rights, crime protections, crime prevention, safety planning and shelter, as well as notifies victims regarding an inmate's release, escape, and court appearances.



<<< Victim Advocate Ellie Castle / Photo credit: Bob Vlach, Woodford Sun

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

### Regular City Council Meetings (Everyone welcome)

Tuesdays at 5:30 pm at the Versailles Municipal Building

- May 2<sup>nd</sup>
- May 16<sup>th</sup>
- June 6<sup>th</sup>
- June 20<sup>th</sup>

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

Tuesdays at 5:30 pm at the Versailles Municipal Building

- May 9<sup>th</sup>
- June 13<sup>th</sup>

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

- Art in the Park: Friday, May 19, 6-9 pm and Saturday, May 20, 9 am-4 pm, Woodford Inn/Green Street area
- VMA Block Party, Friday, May 19, 6:30-9:30 pm, Green St
- Juneteenth Celebration: Friday, June 16, 6-9 pm, Karaoke contest, Huffman Pavilion, Falling Springs Park  
Saturday, June 17, 12-1:30 pm, "The Connection of Knowing Our History & Good Mental Health," Berea College Prof. Jose Pimienta-Bey, Woodford Co. Library  
Saturday, June 17, 3-8 pm, Bounce house, face-painting, Bingo, cornhole, food trucks, Huntertown Community Interpretive Park
- VMA Block Party, Friday, June 16, 6:30-9:30 pm, Green Street



## Lights Downtown!

The City of Versailles has partnered with the Tourism Commission to share the cost of putting lights on downtown buildings from the corner of Rose Hill/Morgan to St. John's Episcopal Church. The lights have been ordered and are expected to be attached to the tops of downtown buildings soon, possibly as early as this month.

The lights will be powered by solar boxes, which will save on electricity costs and be better for the environment. The lights put up downtown over the holidays were very popular and many in the community weighed in that they'd like to see lights year-round.

As downtown Versailles is revitalized, we want residents and visitors alike to enjoy what our town has to offer in a magical, festive setting. The total project is \$24,000, with Tourism contributing \$11,000 and the city covering the rest, which includes lights on the municipal building (city hall) and in its courtyard.

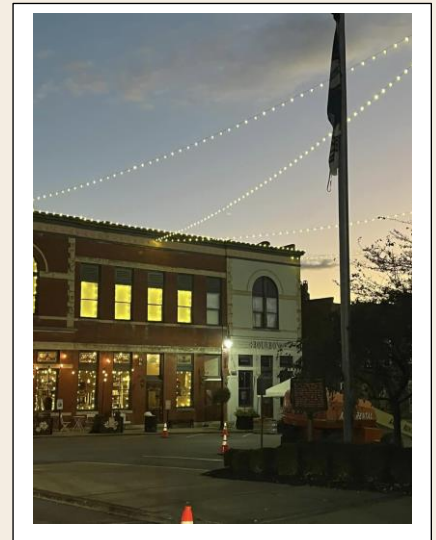


Photo Credit: Emily Downey

## UNITY OUTREACH

Take What You Need  Leave What You Can

- #1: LADY OSCAR VENUE & EVENTS 197 South Main St. (behind building under awning)
- #2: MIDWAY CHRISTIAN CHURCH 123 East Bruen St. (Midway)
- #3: MT. VERNON BAPTIST CHURCH 1220 Old Frankfort Pike (right side porch)
- #4: EL CALVARIO CHURCH 721 Huntertown Rd (behind building & under porch)
- #5: VERSAILLES HOUSING AUTHORITY 519 Poplar Circle (inside—limited hours)
- #6: WOODFORD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT 229 North Main St. (right front porch)
- #7: BLUEGRASS COMMUNITY ACTION 200 Park Street (inside—limited hours)
- #8: CHURCH OF GOD OF PROPHECY 445 Laval Heights (behind building)

**UNITYOUTREACH40383@GMAIL.COM**



# From the Mayor

**Brian Traugott**  
[btraugott@versaillesky.com](mailto:btraugott@versaillesky.com)  
859-806-7743 cell



**2023-2024 Versailles  
City Council >>>**

**Chantel Bingham**  
(859) 788-8830  
[cbingham@versaillesky.com](mailto:cbingham@versaillesky.com)

**Mary Bradley**  
(859) 873-5843  
[chinadollmert@live.com](mailto:chinadollmert@live.com)

**Laura Dake**  
(859) 351-0460  
[ldake@versaillesky.com](mailto:ldake@versaillesky.com)

**Lisa Johnson**  
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[ljohnson@versaillesky.com](mailto:ljohnson@versaillesky.com)

**Gary Jones**  
(859) 321-0582  
[garyjones1028@gmail.com](mailto:garyjones1028@gmail.com)

**Ann Miller**  
(859) 619-6402  
[amiller@versaillesky.com](mailto:amiller@versaillesky.com)

Spring in Kentucky is here with its usual weather pattern – cold, warm, windy, rainy, and sunny! Keep your coat handy and don't plant anything until after Derby Day! There is lots going on including the groundbreaking in late April for the Downtown Revitalization Project, which we wrote about in the last issue. The sidewalk along High Street is coming along nicely, too. Once finished, it'll be much safer to walk this stretch up to the Falling Springs bypass. Not to jump ahead, but I'm excited to share what the city has in store for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July!

On the 4<sup>th</sup>, join us at 6 p.m. for an unforgettable evening of local flavor and fun at Falling Springs Park! Browse offerings from over 20 vendors, picnic with your family and friends, and enjoy plenty of kids' activities from bounce houses to carnival games. DJ Tim Goins will kick off the entertainment and keep the party going with dancing, contests, and giveaways. Then, to top it off, a spectacular fireworks display will light up the night sky after dusk. Don't miss out on this epic event! And there's more....

**Attention all active-duty service members and Veterans!** We have a special treat for you at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event: complimentary access to our exclusive Veterans Tent for you and a guest! This is the perfect spot to stay cool in the shade and to kick back and enjoy some complimentary food and beverages. Join us for a day of celebration while we honor and thank you for your service. More details coming soon.

With the festivities come a little work! If you're interested in participating as a volunteer or vendor for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, please reach out to Katie Cooley at [events@versaillesky.com](mailto:events@versaillesky.com).

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## 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 will be sent around the first of every other month, so the next one will arrive on or about July 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.



**City of Versailles**  
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