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Citizen's Brief

City of Urbandale

A Quarterly Urbandale Update

Autumn, 2003

Meeting Schedule

City Council

- Tues., October 14, 7:00 pm
- Tues., October 28, 7:00 pm
- Tues., November 11, 7:00 pm
- Tues., November 25, 7:00 pm
- Tues., December 9, 7:00 pm
- Tues., December 23, 7:00 pm

Planning & Zoning Comm.

- Tues., October 7, 6:00 pm
- Mon., October 20, 6:00 pm
- Mon., November 3, 6:00 pm
- Mon., November 17, 6:00 pm
- Mon., December 1, 6:00 pm
- Mon., December 15, 6:00 pm
- Mon., December 29, 6:00 pm

Board of Adjustment

- Wed., October 1, 6:00 pm
- Wed., November 5, 6:00 pm
- Wed., December 3, 6:00 pm

The above meetings are held at City Hall, 3315 70th St.

Parks & Recreation Comm.

- Wed., October 15, 5:30 pm
- Wed., November 19, 5:30 pm
- Wed., December 17, 5:30 pm

Meetings are held at the Library, 3520 86th Street.

Library Board of Trustees

- Mon., October 27, 7:00 pm
- Mon., November 24, 7:00 pm
- Mon., December, 22, 7:00 pm

Meetings are held at the Library, 3520 86th Street.

Water Board of Trustees

Meetings begin at 4:30 p.m. at the Water Department, 3720 86th Street. Please call 278-3940 for dates and times.

Skate Park Is A New Addition At Walker Johnston Playground

Construction on a new facility for skate boarders and roller bladers is under way in Walker Johnston Park. The skate park represents the third phase of the Walker Johnston Regional Playground. Completion of the skate park is slated for November.

At the City Council meeting to accept bids for the \$100,000 project, park designer Dave Nicholas of RDG Crose Gardner Shukert described the skate park as a "street course". The park will feature 12,400 square feet of paved area for skaters, two paved ramps and two entry points to the skate area. It will be located on the east side of the Walker Johnston Park access road, just north of the Walker Johnston Shelter House.

"The City held three community meetings to get input from potential users," Nicholas said. The resulting facility will fit well in the master plan for the Regional Playground.

Parks and Recreation Commissioner Chuck Goodman called the community meeting process "eye-opening".

"There is a big difference between our [initial] perception of what users wanted, and what they told us they wanted," Goodman said. For example, the park will not include a "half-pipe". Of the design process, Goodman said, "nobody got exactly what they wanted, but [the park] will be better than 90 percent of the parks out there."

While "teens" are the focus clientele for the skate park, Nicholas said that group includes "third-graders through 40 year olds" when it comes to skateboarding and blading.

Previously completed phases of the Regional Playground include "the cocoon", which is geared to toddlers, and "the tree house", which is aimed at pre-teens.

The City Council was unanimous in its support for the skate park, but only after a brief discussion of the liability that the City might take on with the new facility.

According to City Manager Robert Layton, the City's liability is limited by a recently-passed state law designed to make these projects more feasible for cities. Additionally, signs will be posted at the facility reminding users that skating and blading have inherent risks and that they must take personal liability when using the skate park.

New Solid Waste Fee

Beginning in October, residents will see a new fee for solid waste collection on their monthly water bill.

The City Council voted in July to adopt the \$6.00 fee to fill a \$337,000 deficit in the City's budget. The budget gap was created when the state legislature reduced its aid to the City during the 2003 legislative session.

Payment for the solid waste fee may be included in the the same check that is used to pay the water bill.

For more information on the new fee, please read the "frequently asked questions" on page 2.

From the Mayor's Desk...

Most Urbandale residents are aware that the City is considering the development of a community center. This project was identified as a priority during the 1998 Imagine Urbandale community visioning process.

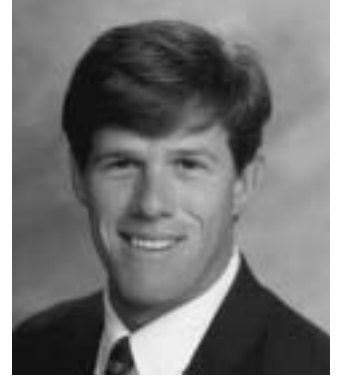
As I write this, the City is pursuing two options. First, we are considering a joint project with the Cities of Grimes and Johnston, and the YMCA. The benefit of this partnership is that it could result in a facility that is bigger and better than any one partner could develop on its own.

The second option is a partnership with the Urbandale Community School District. This option would involve the development of a combination community center and elementary school in the western half of the City. In both options, the partnership would be the key to the success of the project.

City staff members are currently analyzing the pros and cons of each option, not the least of which would be the total project cost. When this analysis is complete, a recommendation will be made to the citizen-based Community Center Project Team and to the Parks and Recreation Commission. These two groups would then make a recommendation to the City Council.

Many of our residents participated in the visioning process, and others certainly have opinions about what would make a successful community center. This is the time to let the City Council and me know your thoughts on this important initiative.

To share your opinion on this issue, please feel free to contact the City Council or me directly, or send an email message to communitycenter@urbandale.org.



Brad Zaun, Mayor

New Solid Waste Collection Fee: Frequently Asked Questions

The City's new \$6.00 per month solid waste collection fee begins on October 1st. The charge will be included in all residential water bills. Below are a number of frequently asked questions--and answers--related to the new fee.

Q. Why did the City Council approve this fee?

A. The City Council approved the fee in response to a permanent \$337,000 per year cut in aid from the State of Iowa. The City Council considered a number of expenditure and revenue options to close the budget gap. In the end, it chose to increase revenues through this new fee rather than to cut services.

Q. Why is this fee being charged only to homeowners? Shouldn't businesses pay also?

A. The City does not provide solid waste collection services to businesses. However, it should be noted that the property taxes paid by businesses actually help to subsidize the residential solid waste collection program.

Q. I spend my winters in Arizona. Will I be charged a fee during the months when I am away?

A. Residents who request that their water service be turned off while they are away would not be charged a solid waste fee. If the water is not turned off, then the fee would be charged.

Q. I understand that the solid waste fee will appear on my October water bill. Do I have to write two checks--one for water and one for garbage?

A. No. You can pay your water and solid waste fee with one check.

Q. My family uses the smallest sized garbage container. Why do we have to pay the same as some who uses the largest container?

A. The main reason that the fee is the same is that the cost to tip a container and discard the garbage is about the same regardless of the container size. Even at \$6.00 per month, per household, only about 69% of the total cost of solid waste collection and disposal will be recovered.

Q. What happens if someone moves out of their home? Do they still pay the fee for that month?

A. If a resident vacates a property prior to the 15th of the month, there would be no solid waste fee charged. If a resident vacates on or after the 15th, then the full fee would appear on the following month's bill.

City Officials

Mayor
Brad Zaun

Mayor Pro-Tem
Susann Siebke

City Council
Bob Andeweg
Don Brush
John Forst
Shannon Waddell

Planning & Zoning Comm.
Dennis Connolly
Mark Dickey
Kevin Gass
Jeff Hatfield
Jeff Payne
Mary Polson
Jodee Rogers
Wayne Van Heuvelen
Scott Weiser

Board of Adjustment
Marc DeJong
Carey Evans
Jim Goodman
Tom Muselman
David Russell

Parks & Recreation Comm.
Chuck Goodman
Karla Jeffries
Dan Mueller
Greg Nepstad
Martha Raecker
Vacant (2)

Library Board of Trustees
Jose Garcia
Betty Hamilton
Julie Kroll
Steve Lytle
Marlyn McKeen
Kay Readinger
Mark Zlab

Water Board of Trustees
John McCune
Gerald Nelson
Todd Walker

Tree Board
Bill Dane
Dennis Hill
Bob Kollmorgen
Chad Millang
Rob Rice, Jr.

Please Don't Burn this Newsletter!!!

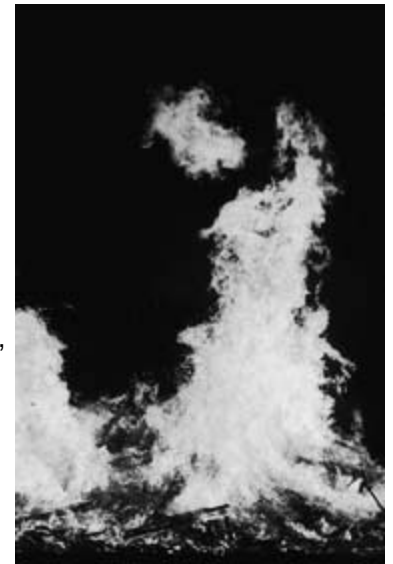
It's that time of the year again, when the leaves begin to fall and the prospect of spending several weekends filling up yard waste bags looks less and less appealing.

Just in case you're tempted to burn your leaves (and other yard waste), the Urbandale Fire Department would like to remind residents of the regulations related to open burning in Urbandale.

For residents who live in Polk County, the rules are easy to remember: open burning is not allowed, including patio fireplaces, fire pits, bonfires, leaf burning and other open burning. The only permitted fires are for the preparation of food using a device with a grate and a provision for holding the fire off of the ground, such as a charcoal or gas grill. Only under very rare circumstances, the Polk County Health Department may issue a waiver permit upon request. For more information, please see the box below.

In Dallas County, residents may use open fires for cooking, heating, recreation and ceremonial purposes. However, as in Polk County, fires for the purpose of discarding yard waste, trees or trimmings, or garbage are prohibited. In Dallas County, under very rare circumstances, the Iowa Department of Natural Resources may issue a waiver permit upon request. For more information, please see the box below.

For more information about open burning in Urbandale, please contact the Urbandale Fire Department at 515.278.3970 or fire@urbandale.org.



POLK COUNTY

Permitted open fires:

Cooking fires only, as long as the unit has a grate for cooking and provisions for keeping the fire raised off the ground.

Prohibited open fires:

No open burning allowed, including recreational fires, unless a permit has been issued by Polk County Dept. of Health.

For more information:

Gary Young, Polk County Dept. of Health,
515.286.3372

Urbandale Fire Department, 515.278.3970

DALLAS COUNTY

Permitted open fires:

Fires for cooking, heating, recreation, and ceremonial purposes.

Prohibited open fires:

No open burning of trees and trimmings, landscape waste, yard waste, residential waste, construction waste, or agricultural practices.

For more information:

Christine Paulson, Iowa Department of
Natural Resources, 515.242.5154

Urbandale Fire Department, 515.278.3970

Briefly Noted... News Briefs

UPD Issues Motorized Scooter Guidelines

Over the past several weeks, the Urbandale Police Department has received a number of calls regarding the increased use of motorized scooters on city streets, sidewalks, and trails. The majority of the callers were complaining about near-collisions between pedestrians and scooters on sidewalks and bike paths.

In response to these complaints, the Urbandale Police Department has offered the following guidance to alert the community to the proper use of motorized scooters.

Motorized (i.e., gas or electric powered) scooters are not allowed on any city streets, in accordance with existing city and state laws. Only licensed vehicles may be operated on City streets, and motorized scooters do not fit the criteria that would allow them to be licensed or registered.

Similarly, motorized scooters are not allowed on sidewalks or trails. Non-motorized scooters may be operated on city sidewalks and bike paths in a careful and prudent manner.

For more information on the proper use of scooters, please contact Sgt. Dave Disney, UPD Public Information Officer, at **515.331.6811** or ddisney@urbandale.org.

Alternatives to Bags and Burning Abound

Residents who prefer not to bag their leaves and other yard waste this fall have a number of alternatives.

Composting is the most environmentally-friendly method for disposing of yard waste. A number of organizations can provide simple instructions for setting up a compost pile. Check out the Iowa State University Extension web site at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/> for starters.

Not interested in composting? Then, consider mulching your yard waste. Mulching has the benefit of returning nutrients to the soil. Plus, it's easy if you use a mulching mower.

And if that still seems like too much work, consider making changes in the types of plantings you have in your yard. Landscaping with evergreens can virtually eliminate the problem with falling leaves (except those that blow in from the neighbor's yard!)

If bagging leaves IS your bag, then be sure to pick up a supply of Compost It! bags or stickers soon so you'll be ready when the leaves fall.

On-Line Registration for Recreation Programs

The Fall 2003 Recreation Program Guide has been out for a few weeks now, but there are plenty of excellent programs still available.

Don't forget: the easiest way to register for a program is to visit www.urbandale.org and register on-line using a credit card.

It's fast, easy, and secure, and you can do it any time--day or night.

Still want to register the "old fashioned way"? Just stop by the Parks and Recreation office at 3310 86th Street, or call **515.278.3963**. (Credit card orders can be taken over the telephone too!)



Bagging is not the only option for disposing of yard waste.

from the City of Urbandale

Deer Hunt Slated Again in Urbandale

The Urbandale City Council recently approved the 6th annual antlerless deer hunt in the City. The hunt will take place from October 1, 2003 through January 10, 2004.

Qualified hunters who have registered with the City may hunt on private property only, primarily west of I-35/80, and at a private farm east of I-35/80, during the special bow hunting season.

The hunt is in response to a recent aerial survey that counted up to 79 deer per square mile in some parts of the City.

All participating hunters must have completed an annual bow proficiency test and a bow hunter safety education course. Hunters must also obtain the property owner's written permission. In addition, the hunter is required to purchase a special bow hunt license as well as a regular hunting license.

For more information, please contact Su Zanna K. Prophet at **515.278.3900** or sprophet@urbandale.org

If you observe possible illegal hunting activities in Urbandale, please call the Westcom dispatch at **515.222.3321** to report the location, vehicle description, observed activities, and other identifying information.

Caring Corps Week Scheduled

Recently, Mayor Brad Zaun, issued a proclamation declaring October 19 - 25 as Urbandale Caring Corps Week. Special events will include a celebration to recognize the work of the volunteers on October 21 from 4:00-6:00 p.m. at the Olmsted-Urban House. On October 25, Make A Difference Day, Caring Corps volunteers will join together to do yard work for Urbandale residents.

Residents in need of some assistance with their yard work should contact the Caring Corps at 515.278.3999. Volunteers who want to help out can do so individually, as a family, or as a group. Just call the Corps office to find out where you are needed.

For more information, please call the Caring Corps (515.278.3999) Monday through Thursday, from 9:00am to 1:00pm, or on Saturday from 9:00am to noon.

Douglas Interchange Ribbon-Cutting Signals Project End

At a September 10th ribbon-cutting ceremony, members of the community celebrated the end of the two-year Douglas Interchange Reconstruction Project.



Mayor Brad Zaun (right) gets assistance from Mark Wandro of the Iowa DOT as he cuts the ribbon to open the new Douglas Avenue Interchange.

With the completion of the project, Douglas Avenue is now a four-lane roadway from Merle Hay Mall to 121st Street. The new interchange will make it easier to get on and off the interchange at Douglas Avenue, and the new higher-capacity bridge will also minimize delays at this key junction. Additionally, bicyclists and pedestrians now have a safe and convenient way to cross the interstate.

The Project was undertaken jointly by the Iowa Department of Transportation, the Metropolitan Planning Organization, and the City.

In Urbandale, *Character Counts!*

When the steering committee of Urbandale's *Character Counts!* initiative explains the point of its program, they describe an experience to which most of us can relate. As difficult as it may be, they say, a person of good character will drive at the speed limit even though there are no highway patrols around simply because it's the right thing to do.

Raising citizens' awareness of how their own behavior influences the values of young people is one objective of the Urbandale *Character Counts!* community effort. Students at Urbandale schools already are learning about the six pillars of character-trustworthiness, responsibility, respect, fairness, caring and citizenship-through the classroom *Character Counts!* program. Now local government officials, civic clubs, sports organizations, business owners, religious groups and citizens are being encouraged to adopt *Character Counts!* language and principles to reinforce the philosophies.

The program has had astounding results, says Scott Raecker of the Institute for Character Development at Drake University. Iowa communities have seen dramatic decreases in juvenile police reports. At a West Des Moines elementary school, 94 percent of parents surveyed said that they had witnessed an improvement in their child's behavior that they attributed to the *Character Counts!* program. The Institute for Character Development promotes the *Character Counts!* program statewide.

The Urbandale steering committee has been working since last winter to organize its community *Character Counts!* effort. In the near future, Urbandale residents will begin to see the six pillars of the *Character Counts!* initiative appear in prominent public locations, perhaps in such places as at ball parks, on team uniforms or on grocery bags. For more information, contact Bruce Bernard at 278-5725, Bill Handsaker at 508-5250, or Mary Polson at 276-6443.

Board of Adjustment to Change Meeting Times

Beginning in October, the regular Board of Adjustment meeting time will change from 7:00pm to 6:00pm. Meetings are held on the first Wednesday of the month at City Hall, **3315 70th Street**.

For more information, please contact Jeff Harm, Zoning Administrator, at **515.278.3935** or jharm@urbandale.org.

Quick Linx

For Information On	Call
Agendas and Minutes, City Council	278-3900
Animal Control Officer.....	278-3911
Beer and Wine Permits	278-3900
Building Permits and Inspections	278-3935
Cemetery	278-3963
City Budget.....	278-3900
City Code	278-3900
Demographics	278-3935
Email Addresses.....	278-3900
Employment (City Jobs)	278-3900
Garbage Collection.....	278-3950
Ice Skating	278-3963
Library Room Reservations	278-3945
Liquor Licenses	278-3900
Maps of Urbandale	278-3950
Newsletters.....	278-3900
Parks	278-3963
Peddler's Permits	278-3900
Pet Licenses.....	278-3900
Playgrounds	278-3963
Pool	278-3959
Potholes	278-3950
Property Maintenance	278-3930
Radio Station (1210 AM)	278-3900
Recreation Programs	278-3963
Recycling Collection	278-3950
Senior Center	278-3907
Sidewalks	278-3950
Sled Hill	278-3963
Spring Cleanup.....	278-3950
Street Maintenance	278-3950
Tickets, Parking	278-3900
Tickets, Speeding	286-3917
Traffic Signals.....	278-3950
Trails.....	278-3963
Voter Information	278-3900
Water Service	278-3940
Web Site (www.urbandale.org).....	278-3900
Weeds	278-3930
Yard Waste Collection	278-3950
Zoning.....	278-3935

All numbers are in the 515 area code.

Kids' Page

Having a Party? Why Not Make It a Pool Party?

The Urbandale Pool is a great place to have a party. The Pool is available for rental on Fridays, beginning at 8:30pm, and on Saturdays and Sundays, beginning at 5:00pm.

Reservations are available on a first-come, first-served basis, and are subject to staff availability.

Call 515.278.3959 for more information.

Fee: 1-50 people \$50/hour
51-200 people \$60/hour

Beggar's Night is October 30th

Trick or treaters will take over Urbandale on Thursday, October 30, from 6:00 to 8:00pm.

Kids, remember these Halloween safety tips:

- * Don't go trick or treating alone and stay in familiar neighborhoods.
- * Carry a flashlight or wear reflective clothing.
- * Avoid costumes that could make you trip or have difficulty seeing.
- * Let your parents inspect all of your treats before you eat them.

Here's to a safe and spooktacular evening!!!

At the Urbandale Public Library...

Book Beasts

A new book discussion group for children in grades 3-5. Sessions will begin at 4:15pm on October 27 and November 24. Register and pick up a book to read at the Library Youth Services Desk.

Book Babies

An introduction to literacy for children 12-24 months and an adult. Participate in simple stories, fingerplays and songs. Mondays at 10:00am, October 20 through November 10. Programs last about 20 minutes. Registration opens one week before the sessions. Please call 515.278.3945, Option 5

Gingerbread House Competition

Create your own gingerbread house and enter it in the 3rd Annual Gingerbread House Competition, sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Prizes will be awarded for 1st and 2nd place in the 11 and under, 12-17, and adult age categories.

Entry forms and houses will be accepted December 8-11 at the Parks and Recreation office (3310 86th Street). All houses will be displayed at the Urbandale Library December 12-19.

Contact the Parks and Recreation office at 515.278.3963 for an entry form, rules and additional information.



Beggar's Night is Thursday, October 30, 2003,

from 6:00pm to 8:00pm.

Motorists...please use extra caution on Beggar's Night!

Postmaster: Please deliver September 24 - 26, 2003

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URBANDALE
3315 - 70th Street
Urbandale, IA 50322

Contact Us!

	VOICE	FAX	E-MAIL
Brad Zaun, Mayor	.278-3900	.278-3905	.bzaun@urbandale.org
Bob Andeweg, Council Member	.278-3900	.278-3905	.bandeweg@urbandale.org
Don Brush, Council Member	.278-3900	.278-3905	.dbrush@urbandale.org
John Forst, Council Member	.278-3900	.278-3905	.jforst@urbandale.org
Susann Siebke, Council Member	.278-3900	.278-3905	.ssiebke@urbandale.org
Shannon Waddell, Council Member	.278-3900	.278-3905	.swaddell@urbandale.org
Bob Layton, City Manager	.278-3900	.278-3905	.rlayton@urbandale.org
Deb Mains, City Clerk	.278-3900	.278-3905	.dmains@urbandale.org
City Hall	.278-3900	.278-3905	.cityhall@urbandale.org
Building Department	.278-3930	.278-3927	.building@urbandale.org
Community Development	.278-3935	.278-3927	.pdekker@urbandale.org
Engineering & Public Works	.278-3950	.278-3927	.engpw@urbandale.org
Fire & EMS	.278-3970	.278-3972	.fire@urbandale.org
Library	.278-3945	.278-3918	.library@urbandale.org
Parks & Recreation	.278-3963	.278-8356	.parks-rec@urbandale.org
Police	.278-3938	.278-3939	.police@urbandale.org
Pool	.278-3959	.278-8356	.parks-rec@urbandale.org
Senior Center	.278-3907	.331-6854	.parks-rec@urbandale.org
Water	.278-3940	.278-3944	.waterdept@urbandale.org
Webmaster	.278-3900	.278-3905	.dgloo@urbandale.org
City Web Site	.http://www.urbandale.org		
Library Web Site	.http://www.urbandalelibrary.org		
Urbandale Informational Radio	.1210 on the AM dial		