



# CITY SCENE

City of Columbia City

## Authentic Connections

By Mayor Ryan Daniel

Vice President Hubert Humphrey once stated that, “The impersonal hand of government can never replace the helping hand of a neighbor.” This statement is even more true today than it was back in the 1960s. Your City Government works hard to be a resource for residents through our programs, ordinances, and representation. Yet, no matter what we do, we cannot replace the kindness and generosity found in so many of our residents. In an age filled with automatic garage doors, social media, and electronics bombarding our lives, we need to find ways to utilize these personal qualities and connect to each other in real, authentic ways.

It seems to me that our neighbors may be the best place to start. Whether you live in an apartment or in a cul-de-sac, our connection to those living closest to us can make or break our experience. When a new family moves in next door, what impression will they get of the neighborhood (and by extension - the city), if no one knocks on the door to greet them? believe that we sometimes discount ourselves as having no power, or little ability to make someone else’s life better. This couldn’t be further from the truth! You never know if that neighbor needed the “smile and wave” treatment, a word of encouragement, or a helping hand. Maybe a plate of muffins or an invite to lunch over the barbeque is the opportunity they (and you) need to build community. Each of us has the power to lift our neighbors up by building real, authentic connections.



You may know that our family moved to a new neighborhood in the middle of last year. We are so thankful for the fantastic neighbors that not only made us feel welcome, but also quickly connected to our family in a real and authentic way. Even in a city that I’ve been a part of for most of my life, moving to a new neighborhood created some uneasiness because of the change. Without our neighbors reaching out and welcoming us in, it would have been a much less enjoyable experience.

So I challenge you to be the neighborhood champion. Be the one who reaches out when that “sold” sign pops up in the yard next door or across the street. Be the ambassador who not only says “hello”, but who also builds meaningful relationships with those closest to them. Stronger relationships and stronger neighborhoods create a stronger, safer community. I encourage you to be the welcome mat for your neighborhood and your community.

Until Next Time...

# Where the Green Grass Grows

By Rosie Coyle | Clerk-Treasurer

As we come into the wet and warmer months, we can count on the grass and weeds to really start sprouting up. It is, and has been, the City of Columbia City's desire for individuals to take pride in the appearance of their homes and property to help keep our City looking safe and welcoming. As stated in Chapter 95, Section 95.020 of the City of Columbia City Code of Ordinances, it is the responsibility of all property owners to cut and remove weeds and other rank vegetation exceeding 8" in height. This includes the front, back and side yards as well as all rights-of-way and any easements where the mowing and maintenance of the easement area remain the obligation of the property owner.

Please know that any grass, weeds, or other unsightly vegetation in excess of 8" are considered to be a violation and can result in a fine.

Additionally, we know that many times when mowing it is inevitable that grass clippings end up in the street or even on the sidewalk. Take note that it is not acceptable and a violation of Chapter 97, Section 97.08, to leave those clippings or other debris in public rights-of-way. Such debris and clippings are not only hazardous to cyclists, but also clog our storm drains and create maintenance issues to our sewer system. Please take the time to blow grass clippings back into your yard, out of our streets and off the sidewalks, so that we can keep everyone safe and our sewers clean.

If properties in your neighborhood appear to be in violation of these ordinances, please call 260-248-5100 ext. 5103 or send an email to [info@columbiacity.net](mailto:info@columbiacity.net).



## Summer Heat

By Tom LaRue | Fire Chief

Summer is upon us! For the average person that means fun, family, and BBQ's. For the fire department, it means heat, campfires, large downtown events, fireworks, droughts, and much more. Whether an incident is manmade or natural, each one creates challenges for the fire department. The significant hurdle is these challenges require manpower, equipment, and time.

All residents can do their part to make this summer safe and enjoyable for our community. If you are planning on having a campfire, please refer to city ordinance 94.071 prior to lighting a fire. As the Fourth of July nears, please familiarize yourself with our city's fireworks ordinance, 101.01. All residents within city limits must adhere to City ordinances. Copies of both ordinances are available on the city's website, [columbiacity.net](http://columbiacity.net), and should be reviewed before lighting a firework or campfire. Let's make this summer safe and enjoyable!



## STORM DRAINS

By Mike Shoda | Water Superintendent

### PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY

When rain falls or snow melts, most of the water drains from our streets, parking lots, and yards to a river or ditch through a storm drain. If a drain is blocked by yard waste, litter, or debris, local flooding can occur which might result in property damage. Help protect your property, along with your neighbor's, by checking your storm drains periodically. Please remove any yard waste, litter, or debris and dispose of them properly.

### POLLUTION IS ILLEGAL

It's illegal in Columbia City to put anything in a storm drain, except for clean storm water. Dumping chemicals, cleaning solutions, concrete washout, motor fluids/oil, or paints in a drain causes water pollution and is hazardous to public health. If you see someone dumping illegally, you can call the city's Report-A-Polluter Hotline at 248.5114 or can send a report via email at [columbiacity.net/community/report-a-polluter](mailto:columbiacity.net/community/report-a-polluter).

### DAMAGED STORM DRAINS

Storm drains can be damaged by heavy vehicles or snow plows, which can present a safety hazard to motorists, cyclists, or pedestrians. If you see a damaged drain, please report it to the City Utilities Office at 248.5100.



## Did You Know?



During spring and summer months, when mosquitoes are prevalent, the city's Street/Sewer Department will place mosquito larvicide briquettes in the catch basins and retention ponds throughout the City.

The Larvicide helps kill mosquito larvae and works to keep the population at a minimum. Residents can purchase their own larvicide briquettes at the Utility Office on the first floor of City Hall for \$1 per briquette.

# **GREETINGS**

BY ASHLEY BUCKLES | MAYOR'S EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

If you've called the mayor's office or stopped by within the past few months, you've likely spoken to me. I am excited to introduce myself as the new Mayor's Executive Assistant here at the City of Columbia City! As a nearly life-long resident of Columbia City, serving our local community feels like my calling. My role in the mayor's office includes scheduling meetings for the mayor, creating newsletters, talking to residents on the phone, and several miscellaneous tasks to help support the mayor in his role. I started my new position as a former teacher, for both WCCS and Oak Farm Montessori School. I've lived in Columbia City since the fourth grade, and was even part of the very first sixth grade class at ISMS (along with the mayor)! During my free time, I enjoy mountain biking, hiking, being on the lake, and



reading. I am also on the board for Giving Gardens & joyfully volunteer at the Humane Society of Whitley County with my daughter. My family includes my husband, Brent, my daughter, Kirra (12), my son, Sawyer (9), and my golden retriever, River (2). We enjoy the outdoors and are on a mission to visit as many National Parks as time allows. Healthy eating, taking care of our earth, and spending time with children are a few of my passions. My goal in my new position is to provide each resident with kind, compassionate service. I look forward to speaking with you in the future!

## **Downtown Events**

BY CHIP HILL  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
DIRECTOR

The weather is changing, which means summer events will be gearing up around the city.

Columbia City has much to offer in the warm months for our residents. We hope you're familiar with these activities and events, but if not, please join the fun and experience what the city has to offer. The downtown will be buzzing on Saturday mornings with the Farmers Market. Our market offers wonderful produce, fresh cut flowers, meats, live plants, baked goods, and much more. On the first Friday of every month the city has its First Friday event, where vendors line the streets and food trucks offer a variety of cuisine. You'll always hear live music at First Fridays, and if the lines are too long at the food trucks, stop by one of our local restaurants.

# **THE PARKS ARE HEATING UP**

BY MARK GREEN | PARK DIRECTOR

The Park Department will once again be very busy this summer with several events. The Russel and Evelyn Fahl Aquatics Center will open up on Memorial Day weekend (May 28th). Memberships to use the aquatics center and information on swim lessons and joining the swim team can be found at [columbiacity.net/aquaticscenter](http://columbiacity.net/aquaticscenter). If you are interested in renting the pavilion at the aquatics center for a birthday, graduation party, family get together, or business gathering, please contact Kyle Weigold. The aquatics center phone number is 260-248-5182. Kyle would be happy to get your group set up in the pavilion while you have fun in the pool.

The Columbia City fireworks will be on July 3rd this summer. We are excited to be having a popular area band performing a free concert that night. The Band Cheyenne will begin their concert at 7:30pm, and they will perform until 9:30. There will be many food trucks serving food starting at 6pm until the fireworks are over.

Junior Football registration will begin on June 6th and finishes on July 15th . Kids in 2nd-6th grades are able to play tackle football during the fall season. The leagues are broken up into 2nd-4th grade playing together, and 5th-6th grader playing together. The cost to play is \$100. Registration will be online at <https://columbiacity.net/park-junior-football-league/>.

The splash pad will open in Morsches Park on Memorial Day weekend. It will continue to stay on throughout the summer months, and then it will close on Labor Day weekend. This is a free feature for all families, so we hope you enjoy the summer weather in Morsches Park. Splash Pad hours are Monday-Friday: 10:00am-8:00pm and Saturdays & Sundays: 12:00pm-6:00pm



# Tournament Schedule

Friday June 24th  
6:00pm - 8:00pm

Saturday June 25th  
9:00am - 12:00pm

Flight schedules will be made available on June 17th

## Cost

\$25 per person

Following the completion of your registration, you will receive an email detail the rules and procedures for participation.

**Registration Closes June 12th**

RUSSEL & EVELYN FAHL  
**Aquatics**  
CENTER



# Fahl Aquatic Center Pickleball Classic

Please Scan the QR code to access the registration page

