



# THE OKOBOJI QUARTERLY

October 2022

## COUNCIL CHATTER:

**Sherwood Forest** - On July 12, 2022, the City Council heard from Austin Vachal, representing the proposed *Sherwood Forest* park project to be located on the “Old Inn Golf Course” property north of Lake Shore Drive. The proposed park, owned and operated by the Dickinson County Conservation Board, is comprised of nearly 70 acres of trails, a playground, a pavilion, and other passive amenities. During the July Council meeting, there was significant discussion pertaining to a proposed northern access extended off of Park View Avenue into the park. Community members expressed their concern over this northern access and requested reconsideration. After the meeting, representatives of the City met with representatives of the Dickinson County Conservation Board and were able to reach a middle ground which included the removal of the northern access and relocation of many of the park’s northern amenities. Vachal again addressed the Council on September 13, 2022, with the updated plans which were well received. Assuming no delays, construction is expected to begin Spring of 2023. The City appreciates the community members who took part in these conversations.

An overview of the park can be seen on the Dickinson County Conservation Board’s website at [www.dickinsoncountyconservationboard.com](http://www.dickinsoncountyconservationboard.com) and selected “APPROVED CONCEPTUAL PLAN FOR SHERWOOD FOREST PARK.”

**Front Yard Setback, R-3 Properties** - On July 12, 2022, the City Council considered and approved Ordinance No. 270 amending the City’s zoning ordinance pertaining to the establishment of the ‘Front Yard’ on ‘R-3, Lakeshore Residential’ properties. More detail is provided in the July 2022 newsletter (which is posted on the City’s website) but, in short, the amendment establishes ‘Front Yard’ setbacks on these properties by utilizing the two most adjacent properties as opposed to the properties within 200’ in each direction. It also allows for the 10’ encroachment of unenclosed decks and patios into the front yard setback.

**Campgrounds** - During the August City Council meeting, the Council approved Ordinance No. 271 amending the City’s zoning ordinance pertaining to ‘Campgrounds’ (to include RV parks and the like) in the ‘C-1, General Commercial’ zoning district. The C-1 zoning district is the only zoning district in the City of Okoboji in which campgrounds are permissible. This ordinance changed campgrounds from a permissible use of the C-1 zoning district to conditional use of the C-1 zoning district essentially creating stricter requirements, a series of approvals from the City, and notification of adjacent property owners.

**Holiday Way Drainage Project** - During the July meeting, the Council awarded a bid for a drainage project that has been taking place on Holiday Way. With the demolition of a previously existing home at this location, the City was able to modernize and put underground new storm water infrastructure. This project is significantly completed.

**Vicious Dogs** - At the upcoming October City Council meeting, the City Council will discuss potential amendments to the City’s “Vicious Dog” ordinance which outlines criteria as to what qualifies a dog as vicious or dangerous. Presently, the City’s ordinance states that dogs may be considered vicious if the dog has attacked or bitten any person without provocation. The amended ordinance would expand that definition to include more than once injuring or killing another domestic animal while off the dog owner’s property, if the dog has been training or participating in dog fighting, or if the dog was deemed vicious or dangerous for any of the aforementioned reasons in another governmental subdivision.

**Brooks North Lane Storm Sewer** - At the same October meeting, the Council will consider approval of a project to redo the storm sewer intakes on Brooks North Lane. The current intakes are shifting away from the street creating concern of water getting under the street and potentially causing further settling or undermining.



Mayor:  
**Mary VanderWoude**

Council:  
**Julie Andres**  
**Jim Delperdang**  
**Jim Hentges**  
**Walter Mendenhall**  
**Dan Sanders**

City Administrator:  
**Michael Meyers**

Deputy City Clerk:  
**Jill Verdoorn**

Public Works:  
**Neal Houge**  
**Tim Jensen**  
**Thad Thomas**

Police Chief:  
**Jason Petersen**

Officers:  
**Scott Colt**  
**Brent Sexton**  
**Josh Zigrang**

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Winter Games 43  
January 26-29, 2023

## PRAIRIE IN PROGRESS

As part of the City of Okoboji's commitment to low impact development principles, the City will undertake the reestablishment of many rain gardens throughout the community. The City intends to utilize native prairie plantings which could take years to develop and establish. Maintenance techniques may include mowing, weed management, or prescribed burning.

**The City kindly requests that adjacent residents do not rake, seed, or apply any treatment at these locations.** While the City appreciates the willingness to keep Okoboji beautiful, please know that these selected rain gardens are in the process of reestablishment.

The City will target future rain gardens in the years to come. If a rain garden is presently being maintained by a private property owner, the City will not work on that specific rain garden without further conversation with the property owner.

We appreciate your patience as we seek to reestablish our rain gardens to allow for a beautiful, yet functional and maintainable rain garden.



### YARD WASTE:

The City of Okoboji picks up yard waste each Wednesday as weather permits. **All yard waste must be at the curb no later than 7:00am on Wednesday mornings to ensure that it is picked up.**

Yard waste such as grass clippings, leaves, and brush should be in a paper yard refuse bag not to exceed 40 pounds.

Branches are also picked up **but must be bundled**. Please limit the size of branches to 2 inches in diameter, not longer than 4 feet, and no more than 75 pounds.

**INTERESTED IN SETTING UP YOUR WATER ACCOUNT ON AUTO PAY?** - Call City Hall and we are more than happy to assist in this free and efficient process. -- Residents can also pay their water bills online at [www.okobojicity.com](http://www.okobojicity.com). Click on the 'CLICK TO PAY NOW' button on the left. Service fees apply when paying online.

### 2022/2023 COUNCIL MEETINGS:

**Please note: City Council meetings have returned to City Hall (1322 Highway 71 N, Okoboji, Iowa 51355) Residents are encouraged to check the agenda prior to the meeting to determine the meeting location. All Council meetings are held at 6:00pm. If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to City Staff directly.**

| Oct. 11 | Nov. 8 | Dec. 13 | **2023** | Jan. 9 | Feb. 7 | Mar. 14 | Apr. 11 | May 9 | June 13 | July 11 | Aug. 8 | Oct. 10 |

To reach out directly to the Council, email [council@okobojicity.com](mailto:council@okobojicity.com)

**THANK YOU!** - On behalf of the City of Okoboji and the Okoboji pickleball community, we are very thankful to receive a generous donation from the Grant family in memory of Janis Madland-Grant. It was Jan's determination, leadership, and guidance that allowed Okoboji pickleball to grow from simply an idea into what it is today. We look forward to continued improvements of this facility with this donation.

**COMMUNICATION FROM THE CITY** - Are you interested in being on a mailing list to receive important email communication from the City of Okoboji? Visit our website, hover over 'Government,' select 'Mailing List' and fill out the form provided.

Please know that City Hall is open Monday - Friday, 8:00am - 4:30pm, and City Staff is always present and willing to assist. If you would like to reach out to the City Administrator directly, please email [michael.meyers@okobojicity.com](mailto:michael.meyers@okobojicity.com). If you would like to reach out to the Council, please see contact information listed below.

**IDOT HIGHWAY 71 PROJECT** - At this time, the City's understanding is that the IDOT will be putting the project back out to bid in October 2022. It is anticipated that the project will begin in the Spring of 2023. Throughout the project, the City of Okoboji will maintain 2-way north-south traffic on Highway 71 either by detours or by signals. Fall of 2023 is when it is anticipated that the Highway 71 bridge between the City of Okoboji and the City of Arnolds Park will be closed for four weeks. This closure is not planned until after Labor Day 2023.

**SPEIER PARK RENOVATIONS** - The City of Okoboji Park Board remains hard at work looking at different possibilities for the Speier Park playground. The City has budgeted funds to renovate and replace certain aspects of the Speier Park playground including new equipment and an enhanced play surface. If you have any comments or ideas, please do not hesitate to reach out to Michael at City Hall.

**GARBAGE** - Waste Management is back on the "off-season" schedule which means garbage is picked up once per week for residential customers. Garbage and recycling day is on Monday until Memorial Day.

**EAST LAKE PARK DOCK** - Thank you to the Iowa Great Lakes Chamber of Commerce for their 'Walleye Weekend' grant awarded to the City of Okoboji. With this money, City Staff fabricated fishing rod holders for the dock at East Lake Park to improve public access to fishing around the Iowa Great Lakes.

**APPOINTMENT** - Doris Welle has been appointed to the City of Okoboji Planning and Zoning Commission. Welle replaced Jane Shuttleworth on this Commission. We thank Doris for her willingness to volunteer for this important position and thank Jane for her years of service to the City of Okoboji. -- If you are interested in serving the City in an appointed role, please visit [www.okobojicity.com/government/application-for-appointments/](http://www.okobojicity.com/government/application-for-appointments/).