

THE CITY OF Byrnes Mill

Volume 1, Issue 1

August 2017

LAVENTURE NAMED CITY ADMINISTRATOR

We are happy to announce that Debbie LaVenture has accepted the position as City Administrator. She will take on a dual role, serving as both the City Administrator and City Clerk, a position she has held for the past six years.

In total, LaVenture has worked for the City eight years, two of which were as the City's Court Clerk.

As City Clerk responsibilities include (but are not limited to):

- Assistant to the Mayor, City Administrator, Board of Aldermen, Public Works, and all municipal committees, boards and commissions
- Preparation of agendas, minutes, and official documents of the municipality
- Preparation of ordinances, resolutions, and proclamations.
- Coordinate all municipal bidding, advertisement and opening
- Maintenance and preservation of bylaws, ordinances, and other legal instruments of the municipality
- Posting and advertisement of all meeting notices, public hearings and legal notices
- Custody of the municipal seal and the execution of all official documents
- Management of records and archives of the municipality
- Administration of oaths of office and document certification, elections, ordinance violations, and Sunshine Law requests
- Purchaser for the municipality and post all legal notices



Debbie LaVenture
City Administrator/Clerk

As Administrator, she will also [now] oversee daily operations of both the City, Court, and all department heads as well as the financials. The position includes grant writing, website maintenance, and many other duties.

It was a natural progression for LaVenture, who worked very closely to former Administrator, Larry Perney. She knows the job, the City and it's history, a familiarity that makes her a good fit for the job.

She has a sincere vision for the future of the City she has called home for the past 17 years with her husband, Glenn, and two boys, Alex (22) and Clayton (19).

"I WAS INVOLVED IN MY CHILDREN'S SCHOOL AND MET A LOT OF INDIVIDUALS THAT I SPEAK TO AND HELP EVERY DAY, MANY OF WHICH HAVE BECOME MY FRIENDS," SHE EXPLAINED.

She plans to maintain the "small town feel" of Byrnes Mill while committing to the same level of service to citizens.

"THE INTEGRITY OF OUR CITY, POLICE DEPARTMENT, AND BUSINESS DISTRICT ARE VERY IMPORTANT TO ME," SHE SAID.

One of her many future endeavors is to encourage the City to introduce a single solid waste hauler with curbside recycling.

If you have any questions/concerns, please contact LaVenture at administrator@byrnesmill.org or by calling City Hall.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Operation Clean Stream
- Fall Festival planning underway
- Storm damage under repair
- Get in the Know: New communication efforts underway
- Meet Up Spot *for safe selling*
- Tax levy a no-go, now what?

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MAYOR'S MESSAGE

**Mayor Susan Gibson**

Dear Friends and Neighbors~

How do you like our new look? Let us know what you think. I hope everyone enjoyed their Fourth of July. We sure did here on the lake! It's an all day and night celebration starting with a children's parade in the morning and ending with fireworks off the dam. Everyone has a cookout and invites friends and family. It's something we look forward to all year long!

I would like to start by thanking Tony and our Public Works Department for all of their hard work in restoring areas affected by the flood. He has been very proactive in finding solutions to help us sustain less damage, should a flood occur again in the future.

I would also like to congratulate Debbie LaVenture for taking on a dual role within our City. After Larry left, there was some discussion as to where we would go next and Debbie just seemed to be the right answer! Working so closely with him throughout his time with us, Debbie knows the role inside and out. She will continue her position as City Clerk while also serving as our new City Administrator. As a resident, we know that her best interests are always for the City and are confident that she will do great!

In my last message to you, I tried to explain some of our needs as a city to maintain services as you have come to expect them. By laying out all the details in our last newsletter, I had hoped that it would help everyone understand our situation. Sadly, our residents decided against investing in the city. As a consequence we had to make some hard choices we did not want to make. We are already receiving calls and messages about the chip and seal on Old Gravois and Byrnes Mill Road. We know what the roads really need and explained that at length in our last newsletter. Unfortunately, we are only able to do what we have in the budget to do. I suppose it is human nature to not really value things enough until they are gone but I sure hope that does not become a feature of life in Byrnes Mill. I think Byrnes Mill is one of the prettiest, safest places to live on earth. I pray that our residents will reconsider their willingness to invest in their home community.

While I have your ear, I would like to address one more thing that has been worrying me. It has come to our attention through resident feedback that misinformation about our city was spread broadly before the April election. When I first ran for Mayor, one of my top goals was to make us a financially sound and transparent city. At that point we had not had a financial audit for six years. With a lot of hard work by our staff and the Board of Aldermen, we have worked toward that goal. Our finances, expenditures, revenues, and budgets are available for all residents who request them, along with six years of good audits. All of our meetings are open and I have encouraged people to attend in nearly every column since becoming Mayor. Minutes are available upon request or you can sign up on our website to have them automatically sent to you via email. If information comes your way that makes you question or wonder how things work, please call your Alderman, myself or our City Administrator, Debbie LaVenture. We are all available and happy to answer questions, find information, or simply have a discussion.

This will get to you after our National Night Out so I hope to have had the chance to see you there. If not, I will see you at the Fall Festival!

Sincerely,

Susan

PUBLIC WORKS UPDATES

RECYCLE CENTER TO REMAIN OPEN -

Plans were to close the Byrnes Mill Recycling Center as of August 13 due to increasing costs. The City determined that it would be in the best interest of residents to forgo the service *unless an alternate plan came to fruition.*

Byrnes Mill pays for the haul of the recycle containers as well as a full-time employee to manage the center. According to Public Works Director, Tony Whitby, it costs the citizens of the city \$7,000—\$10,000 each year to leave the center open.

“WE SEE ROUGHLY 1500-1600 VEHICLES COME THROUGH THE RECYCLE CENTER EACH MONTH, [ONLY] 20% OF WHICH ARE RESIDENTS,” SAID WHITBY.

Aside from residents, people from surrounding cities and counties utilize the center. Unfortunately, if the city chose to serve residents only at the center, they would lose funding from The St. Louis-Jefferson Solid Waste Management District who contributed approximately 70% of operating costs in year’s past.

“LAST YEAR WE RECEIVED A GRANT OF \$21,000 FROM THEM,” WHITBY EXPLAINED.

The City has been in negotiations with St. Louis-Jefferson Solid Waste Management District who has decided to increase the grant to 90% until the City is able to provide single service trash/recycling curbside or a until a comparable facility opens nearby. The new grant total will be \$31,100.

“There have been talks about a single service trash and recycling curbside pick-up for the city,” Whitby said. “But that wouldn’t happen for at least a year.”



FLOOD DAMAGE—The recent flooding had a direct impact on a number of areas within the City of Byrnes Mill, most notably to the Public Works building and Franks Road.



Damage from 2-feet of water in the office building was covered by insurance. Rehab on the building included demo, as well as the replacement of walls, and some office equipment.



“WE MOVED THE ELECTRIC UP TO FOUR FEET AND USED METAL INSTEAD OF DRYWALL,” WHITBY EXPLAINED.

This will allow for ease in clean-up should flood waters affect the area again.

“THEN WE’LL JUST NEED TO GO IN AND POWERWASH,” HE SAID.

Franks Road received extensive damage, causing a curve to wash away due to the excessive rain. The City went to bid on reconstruction of the road and has submitted an application for reimbursement from FEMA. However, the emergency management funding is not guaranteed.

According to Whitby, FEMA is in the process of increasing the flood elevation which could potentially put some homes in the flood plain.

“FEMA WILL NOTIFY THE CITY ONCE NEW [FLOOD PLAIN] MAPPING IS ESTABLISHED,” HE SAID.

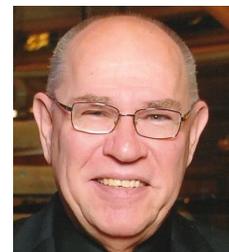
Keep your eyes open for more information on the city website and upcoming newsletters for more information.

NEW CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

On July 1, the City of Byrnes Mill brought Dave Taylor on board to serve as Code Enforcement. The part-time position will come with duties such as occupancy, inspections, and code enforcement in regards to nuisances, buildings, zoning

and violations. Although this is Taylor’s first time serving the City in this capacity, it isn’t his first time with the city or to this position. Taylor’s past experience includes time with the Byrnes Mill Police Department before leaving in

2012 to serve as the Code Enforcement Officer for the City of Ellisville. We are pleased to welcome him back to the City. You can reach Taylor via email at dave.taylor@byrnesmill.org or by calling 636-671-0021.



**DAVE TAYLOR
CODE ENFORCEMENT**

Public Safety Information



National Night Out

It's one of the City's favorite events, hosted by those who serve residents 24-hours a day. National Night Out is a nationwide initiative to bring communities together to stand against crime.

Byrnes Mill Police Department works many months to plan the event, open to residents, their family and surrounding communities.

A number of community groups and organizations come together to ensure the success of the event.

"IT GIVES US A CHANCE FOR BYRNES MILL RESIDENTS TO MEET POLICE OFFICERS AS WELL AS SEE SERVICES AVAILABLE IN THE AREA," EXPLAINED POLICE CHIEF GARY DOUGHERTY.

In addition to meeting Byrnes Mill police officers, people were able to meet members of the High



Ridge Fire Protection District, North Jefferson County Ambulance District, Big River Ambulance District, and 9-1-1 Dispatch.

Members of the Jefferson County Drug Coalition were on hand to safely dispose of prescription drugs as well as answer questions.

Some of the favorites included getting close to The Land of Giants Trucks, the dunking booth, and food from Company B BBQ. The City would like to thank everyone who made the event a success from the volunteers, businesses, organizations, and attendees who make it all worthwhile!



"In 2016, our officers were able to help 103 kids,"

Shop with a Cop Paintball Tournament

On July 29, Byrnes Mill Police hosted their *first annual* Shop With a Cop Paintball Tournament. The event brought together athletes of all types in a fun atmosphere with one purpose in mind — giving back to youth in need.

The Streetball Style Tournament allowed individuals to participate for a nominal fee with proceeds going to support the Shop

With a Cop program.

"IN 2016, OUR OFFICERS WERE ABLE TO HELP 103 KIDS," EXPLAINED CHIEF GARY DOUGHERTY.

Officers are to be commended for their proactive approach to sustaining the program throughout it's growth. By hosting events like this, they are able to ensure that every child and their family have a

little brighter holiday despite their financial circumstances.

If you know someone who might be in need of support from this program or if you simply want to help, call 636-677-7727.

Contributions may be sent to: Spring Hills Presbyterian Church 6247 Upper Byrnes Mill Road Byrnes Mill, MO 63051 Attn: Shop With a Cop



Look for a sign like this in a designated parking space outside Byrnes Mill City Hall

SELLING SAFETY — Byrnes Mill Police have teamed up with OfferUp to support local buyers, sellers, and the community in safe selling exchanges.

With internet sales on the rise, officers want to be sure that every precaution is made to ensure the safety of residents within the community.

Outside City Hall, a designated parking spot has been marked with a green **MEET UP** sign. Placed directly in front of surveillance cameras, the spot allows individuals freedom to make exchanges 24-hours a day.

The presence of an officer for exchanges is based on request and availability.



DRIVE SAFELY — Now that school is in session, Byrnes Mill Police will be keeping a closer eye on bus stops and bus routes. Please obey the laws, watch your speed, and keep an eye out for children!

Practice Safe Selling

EVENTS & news

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Northwest Historic and Preservation Society is looking for new members. If you have a love for history and community, this might just be the organization for you!

Meetings are held the 1st Thursday of the month at 7 pm inside the Jefferson County Library, High Ridge Branch.

Take part in upcoming events such as the Hagemeister House Open House at Byrnes Mill Fall Festival and a two-day Christmas Open House to be held Thanksgiving weekend.

For more information, please call 636-375-3558.



Byrnes Mill
Fall Festival
Saturday, October 7
10am - 5pm

~

PIONEER CRAFTS
VENDORS
MUSIC
FOOD
KIDS' ACTIVITIES
AND MORE!!!

Sponsored by Byrnes Mill and the
Northwest Historic and Preservation Society

For more information call Susan at 636-677-0514



Mark your calendars for **Saturday, August 26**, if you're interested in joining the community's **Operation Clean Stream (OCS)** team. Known as the *country's largest and longest running river restoration project*, OCS is a way to repair damage that occurs to area streams, tributaries and rivers due to flooding, littering and trash left behind by careless

individuals. The local group will meet at Rockford Beach and end in Byrnes Mill Park. Due to high water, the group was unable to meet last year so there is much work to be done to catch up. According to area coordinator, Rob Kiczenski, on average the local team removes over 100 tires from the river as well as other trash and materials. If you're interested in volunteering, call City Hall at 636-677-7727 or email robert.kiczenski@byrnesmill.org. All volunteers receive a free t-shirt and food after all their hard work. Some boats are provided but volunteers who can bring a kayak, canoe or boat are appreciated.



MCBROOM STEPS DOWN, LAVENTURE JOINS IN



JIM MCBROOM

Ward 1 Board Member, Jim McBroom, resigned from his seat on the Byrnes Mill Board of Aldermen (BOA) after nine years. We are grateful for his service to the City both as an important part of the Board of Aldermen as well as a willing volunteer for city projects, including heading up Operation Clean Stream. The City

would like to thank Glenn LaVenture for his willingness to step up and fill the remainder of Jim's term. Glenn comes with past experience as a BOA member and deep knowledge of the city. In April, he will be eligible to run for another term. Thank you both for your dedication to the City of Byrnes Mill.



GLENN LAVENTURE

BALANCING ACT: CONSEQUENCES OF THE FAILED TAXY LEVIES

Residents said “No, S.I.R.” to Propositions S, I, and R which were on the ballot this past April. Election results brought with them a hard task for members of the Byrnes Mill Budget Committee. The committee, consisting of City Administrator/Clerk, department heads for both the Police Department and Public Works, the Board of Aldermen, and the Mayor came together in six workshops to discuss the future of a number of City projects.

An increase in the cost of the employee healthcare plan as well as an \$80,000 decrease in revenue stemming from the SB regulations added to the disappointment of the failure to pass the first tax increase request in the City’s history.

“WE SET OUR PRIORITIES, TRIMMED AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE FROM EACH DEPARTMENT AND DECIDED WHAT CUTS WERE NECESSARY,” EXPLAINED MAYOR SUSAN GIBSON.

Cuts include the full time position of the City Administrator, which is now combined with the City Clerk role. Cuts also include City Collector, which now serves as Collector/Finances, and two major cuts to Public Works—road adoptions program and the recycle center. Although both programs were points of pride for the City, they cannot be retained under the current budget constraints.

“THE ROAD ADOPTION PROGRAM HAD THE VISION OF UNIFORM, WELL-MAINTAINED ROADS THROUGHOUT THE CITY,” GIBSON SAID. “THE RECYCLE CENTER SERVED NOT ONLY OUR RESIDENTS BUT ALSO A WIDE SWATH OF OUR REGION — AN IMPORTANT PUBLIC GOOD.”

What these changes mean...

Although the City was able to give employees a small raise after three years without one, added another full-time police officer, and a replacement police car, there are some changes that should be noted. In order to understand budget cuts to the full extent, it’s important to understand what the City was asking.

Proposition “S” for Safety was a 40-cent property tax increase, equivalent to an increase of approximately \$75 for a \$100,000 home. A “No” to Prop S means that Byrnes Mill Police Department will remain running *under capacity*, leaving one officer on duty at a time, causing an unsafe environment for those officers who are on duty alone, not to mention the City at large. It also means no pay increases, which could make it difficult to retain good officers who are currently being paid well below state averages. This could cause property values to decrease, should it affect city safety. Currently, Byrnes Mill is ranked #7 in the state of Missouri for safest city based on FBI and US Census data from 2016. Average response time for incidents is less than five minutes compared to 30 minutes in other areas of the county.

Proposition “I” for Improvements was a 1/2 cent sales tax increase that would be added to items purchased in Byrnes Mill to assist with capital improvements such as streets, storm water damage reduction, safety, and other benefits. Proposition “I” would have allowed for street improvements such as culverts and guard rails, resurfacing and striping of roads, improved road shoulders and ditches, upgraded street maintenance equipment, expanded services and overall safety and drivability of Byrnes Mill roads.

Proposition “R” for Roads added to Prop I, was also to be used for transportation services. The proposed 1/2 cent sales tax increase would have assisted with litter pickup and cleaning of City roads, repair work such as fixing potholes, cleaning culverts, maintenance of street equipment as well as ice control and snow removal.

Propositions “I” and “R” would have meant an overall increase of 1% to the City’s general sales tax, a rate that hasn’t changed in over 30 years. It would have allowed the City to set up a street repair and maintenance schedule for all City maintained streets. Byrnes Mill currently spends an annual average of \$2,400 per mile of road compared to neighboring Jefferson County towns, such as Arnold, who spend more than \$7,000 per mile annually.

The three propositions (S, I, & R) combined could have brought the City an additional \$315,000–\$330,000 each year.

With current funding decreases and increasing costs all around, discussions will be had as to how to reintroduce the propositions at a later date. Until then, the Budget Committee will continue to assess areas of necessary change while looking out for the best interests of Byrnes Mill residents. They very much regret the consequences and inconvenience of each loss.

Please direct any questions to City Administrator/Clerk, Debbie LaVenture, administrator@byrnesmill.org or 636-677-7727.

An Intern Job Well Done

For the past couple of months, the City of Byrnes Mill has had the pleasure of having two lovely young women on hand to assist around the office.

Megan and Rebecca Prado, twin daughters of Ward 1 Alderman, Bob Prado, served as interns for the City, taking on a variety of duties.

According to City Administrator, Debbie LaVenture, the ladies helped her tremendously with everyday office work, which they completed in a detailed, timely fashion.

They busied themselves with things such as making copies, organizing

newspaper articles, and historian duties.

“I WOULD MAKE A LIST, PUT THE PAPERS DOWN AND IT WOULD BE DONE!” LAVENTURE SAID.



Megan and Rebecca Prado

Their bright, cheery personalities made them a delight to have around City Hall.

On behalf of the City, we would like to thank the ladies for their hard work. We wish them well in their future endeavors, including their time at Missouri State University where they will be returning in the fall.

Byrnes Mill welcomes others who might be interested in serving as an intern for the City. For more information, contact Debbie LaVenture at 636.677.7727.



KEEP IN TOUCH!

The world is moving at a faster pace and we are trying to keep up! As residents of the City of Byrnes Mill, we want to be sure that YOU are the first to know important information that pertains to our City. We are working on a new communication platform that will allow us to send out monthly eBlasts on events, quick updates on any emergency situations as well as good news within our community. We will also be introducing a group Facebook page open *only to residents of our City*. This will give us a chance to communicate more quickly and efficiently, should an emergency arise, but in a private group geared just for you. We hope you are as excited as we are to get started! Please join us in spreading the word about new, faster communication soon to come. We need your help!

City of Byrnes Mill Communication Form

Name _____ Please sign me up for:

Address _____

Spouse/Children's Names _____ Monthly eBlasts

Phone _____ Important/Emergency eBlasts

Email Address _____

Special Notes _____ Facebook Group Page

Signature _____ Date _____

By signing above, you give the City of Byrnes Mill permission to contact you via email, social media and/or telephone for important updates and information pertinent to residents. In order for us to add you to the group Facebook page, please confirm your address, contact phone number, and social media display name. We will then contact you via email once we are ready to roll out these new lines of communication. Please send this information via email to: byrnesmill.communication@gmail.com or mail completed slip to:

Byrnes Mill City Hall, 141 Osage Executive Circle, Byrnes Mill, MO 63051
 Be sure you tell us which forms of communication you would like to sign up for.



City of Byrnes Mill

141 Osage Executive Circle
Byrnes Mill, MO 63051

Municipal Complex

Byrnes Mill City Hall

141 Osage Executive Cir.

Byrnes Mill, MO 63051

Phone: 636-677-7727

Fax: 636-677-5533

www.byrnesmill.org

Hours: Mon-Fri

9am–4:30pm

City Administrator/Clerk:

Debbie LaVenture

Collector/Deputy City Clerk :

Tracy McAfee

City Attorney: Robert Sweeney

Police Department

Chief of Police: Gary Dougherty

Phone: 636-677-7727

Phone: (non-emergency): 636-797-9999

EMERGENCY: DIAL 911

Municipal Court

Judge: Colby Smith-Hynes

Prosecuting Attorney: Allison Sweeney

Court Administrator: Elise Gannon

Prosecuting Attorney Clerk: Julie Farthing

Court Night: 2nd & 3rd Tuesday

Public Works

4197 Lower Byrnes Mill Rd.

Byrnes Mill, MO 63051

Director: Anthony Whitby

Staff: Aaron Dillard, Brandon Rock,

Zoey Rock

Hours: Monday- Friday, 7am–3:30pm

Phone: 636-671-0021

Code Enforcement:

Dave Taylor

Part-time availability

Phone: 636-671-0021

Elected Officials

Mayor Susan Gibson

Board of Aldermen

Ward 1: Glenn LaVenture, Bob Prado

Ward 2: Cindy Davies, Jerry Klipsch

Ward 3: Rob Kiczenski, Mary Scheble

Board of Aldermen Meetings

1st and 3rd Wednesday, 7pm

Boards & Commissions

Planning & Zoning (Meetings as needed)

Ann Walters

Lisa Hosey

John Scheble

Cindy Davies

Rick Schweppe

Richard Ross

Planning & Zoning Meetings

2nd Monday, 7pm

Board of Adjustment (Meetings as needed)

Sally Eads

Ron Davies

Pete Frisella

Craig Morris

Doug Smith