



# Metro Codes

## E - News for Neighborhoods

### Metropolitan Government of Nashville and Davidson County

### **Metro Codes Works with Habitat For Humanity**

Codes inspectors often keep strange hours.

In order to meet the demands of their rigorous professions, inspectors may be called out at all hours for a variety of reasons. Sometimes, these hours can cause some unhappiness, but there were no frowns among Metro Code inspectors working with Habitat for Humanity in pre-dawn inspections in early November.

"When Habitat for Humanity called to let us know that there would be 10 new houses in Providence Park which needed early morning inspections, we knew it would be no problem," Terry Cobb, Metro Codes Director said of the special request. "Habitat makes a difference in this community every day so all of the Codes staff was ready to do what it took to help in the project."

From the first inspector at 5:30 a.m. on Monday morning to the final inspection on Friday afternoon, Metro Codes exhibited a willingness to improve the quality of life as well as protect the safety of all Nashvillians.

Habitat for Humanity and Whirlpool Corporation entered into this joint effort to build an entire block of 10 homes in just a week as part of the new "Building Blocks" program. This planned annual event was hosted for the first time by Nashville Area Habitat for Humanity (NAHFH).

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In addition to the director, Mechanical-Gas Division Chief Jim Daly, Plumbing Division Chief Dell Myers and Buildings Division Chief Byron Hall along with inspectors Jim Hudgins and Jim Guschke assisted Habitat with the project.



The 10 homes were built in the Providence Park area, Nashville's first all-Habitat community and quickly growing into one of the nation's largest contiguous all-Habitat community. Providence Park was started in 2003 by NAHFH and now has more than 65 Habitat homes, with plans to complete more than 140 homes by the end of 2007. The Building Blocks project will be the largest multi-home build in NAHFH's 21-year history.

During the build week, business leaders from around the country participated in a corporate summit to discuss effective corporate social responsibility and developing knowledge among new leaders, Habitat affiliates and their surrounding communities. The build culminated in home dedications and a Thanksgiving-style luncheon prepared by local chefs for the 10 families and hundreds of volunteers.



Nashville Area Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit, ecumenical Christian housing ministry that provides families with the life-changing opportunity to purchase a decent, affordable home. The agency has tripled in size since 2002 and closed its 2005 fiscal year with a record number of homes built (30).

Additionally, the NAHFH HomeWORKS program provides hundreds of hours of classes for partner families on budgeting, credit management, mortgage finance, and home maintenance. These classes build each individual's leadership, citizenship and life skills.

#### Habitat for Humanity International

Habitat for Humanity International, based in Americus, Ga., is an ecumenical Christian ministry that welcomes to its work all people dedicated to the cause of eliminating poverty housing. Since 1976, Habitat has built more than 200,000 houses in nearly 100 countries, providing simple, decent and affordable shelter for more than one million people. For more information, visit [www.habitat.org](http://www.habitat.org)



## Neighborhood Conference

Bill Purcell's first act as Mayor of Metropolitan Nashville and Davidson County was to issue an executive order creating "the Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods with a designated purpose of:

- The development of programs to preserve and improve neighborhoods
- To coordinate with other departments and agencies of the Metropolitan Government to assure the prompt and effective handling of problems experienced by the residents of Davidson County
- To advise the Mayor on policies that would protect and improve the neighborhoods of the Metropolitan Government.

Since then, an annual conference has been held to celebrate neighborhoods and the role each one plays in making Nashville a great place.

This year, Mayor Purcell, along with Michelle Cummings - Steele, the Director of the Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods (MOON), welcomed hundreds of Nashville neighborhood leaders to the sixth annual conference.

Metro Codes, represented by several members of the staff, some of whom attending were Director Terry Cobb, Assistant Directors Sonny West and Bill Penn. Also from the Property Standards Division were Ron Mitchell, Jeff Castleberry, Billy Fields, Mike Morgan, Mattie Jones, Ernest McClain and Michael Lyons participated in all phases of the conference. Through panel discussion and power point presentations, Metro Codes staff members were able to help simplify the codes enforcement and zoning process



while educating the participants in the role Codes plays in the everyday life of all Nashvillians as the "other public safety department."

The conference was a tremendous success.

"Our mission is to improve the quality of life in Nashville's neighborhoods through a more informed, active and involved citizenry," Ms. Cummings—Steele said. "The conference gives us an opportunity to bring together neighborhood leaders with Metro government leaders in an effort to inform and build up, or rather give the neighborhoods the tools they need to make their community a better place to live, work and play."

She went on to say the conference also gives the Mayor's Office of Neighborhoods an opportunity to celebrate those leaders in the community that have worked hard over the years on behalf of their community.

## Purcell Named Top Public Official by GOVERNING Magazine

Mayor Bill Purcell earned **GOVERNING** Magazine's Public Official of the Year honor as a mayor "who simultaneously improved his city's quality of life and spurred business expansion with an ambitious agenda that included strengthened public schools and revitalized neighborhoods."

Purcell became the first Nashville mayor to receive the honor in the magazine's 13 years of presenting the Public Official of the Year awards to the nation's top state and local government leaders. Former Gov. Ned McWherter was similarly honored the first year awards were made in 1994, at the end of his second term in office.

GOVERNING Magazine's Public Official of the Year awards are given in recognition of outstanding achievement at the state and local level. A total of nine 2006 awards were announced by the magazine covering executive and legislative, elected and appointed posts.

The winners also include Mississippi's governor, the speaker of the Massachusetts House, the executive of King County, Washington; the president of the New Jersey Senate, Chicago's library commissioner, Philadelphia's chief information officer, the Bush administration homelessness czar, and the city manager of Ventura, California.



"These individuals have exhibited a remarkable flexibility," said Alan Ehrenhalt, **GOVERNING's** executive editor. "They have thrived in the face of the most daunting and unexpected obstacles, from a natural disaster to a health care crisis to entrenched corruption. Their versatile leadership and innovative policies should serve as models for their peers nationwide."

The award winners are profiled in the November issue of **GOVERNING** and will be honored at a dinner November 15 in Washington, D.C. **GOVERNING**, now 19 years old, is an independent national magazine devoted to coverage of state and local government. It has a circulation of 85,000.



## Request For Service (RFS): From Request to Abate—Roadmap to Solving Problems Part 2,

In our last article, we discussed the basic steps for processing a Request For Service (RFS). We've conducted our initial inspection, found the property to be in violation, have issued the owner an abate notice, and we have now gone back and found that the violation(s) have not been corrected. The next step in the process is to have the violator appear in environmental court. We do that with a civil warrant. Our civil warrants are served by the County Sheriff's Department. The law requires that we have "personal" service, which means the warrant must be given to the person being served and that person must sign for the sign for the warrant as proof of service. If the owner/violator cannot be served as required by the law, we cannot bring the case before the Environmental court Judge. Folks have asked why we can't just send the summons out certified mail or stick it in the mailbox. Unless we can make physical contact with the defendant, the law says we have not satisfied the requirement for service.

Service of the warrant establishes the actual court day. When the warrant is requested, the inspector will indicate the desired court date, but if the warrant cannot be served in time to give the defendant at least a week's notice of the hearing, that court date will be changed by the sheriff's deputy and the courts will be notified of the change. Otherwise, once served, we have a court date and the case will appear on the docket for that date. Environmental court is held every Wednesday at 2:30 p.m. in the A.A. Birch Court Building in courtroom 5D.



\*Photo of the A.A. Birch Building is by courtesy of Gary Layda\*

On the first hearing of the case, the environmental court judge will allow an extension of the case if reasonable progress is being made to correct the violation. If the defendant has corrected the violation on or before their court date, the inspector will ask that the case be dismissed with court costs.

Currently those costs are \$87.75. In cases where we have a repeat offender or where the defendant does not make progress towards correcting the violation, the inspector will ask for a fine plus the court costs. If the violation is not corrected within the extension time period, the next step would be for the Judge to order the correction be made with what is called a **Mandatory Injunction**. The defendant is given a set period to correct the violation with the mandatory Injunction. Should the defendant not correct the violation by the next court date, the judge can order them placed under a **Show Cause Order**. If the defendant does not correct the violation by the court date established by the Show Cause Order, the defendant will have to show proof as to why they should not go to jail. In cases where the defendant is making progress and has only a small amount of work left to do, the Judge will extend the case under a Show Cause Order. However, if the defendant fails to correct the violation at the end of the extension then they are subject to up to 5 days in jail. On repeat offenses or in cases

where a jail term has already been served, the Judge can order the defendant to spend 10 days in jail.

In rare cases, the defendant may fail to appear in court when under a Show Cause Order. In the case, the Judge will grant a **Writ of Attachment** or **Body Attachment**. Under this order, the defendant will have to post a cash bond or immediately go to jail and will be held until the next available court date. The Judge can order that a defendant be charged a fine of 50 dollars (\$50.00) per day for each day the property is in violation. Environmental court is a useful tool in getting violation corrected. The ability to hear cases on a weekly basis is another advantage in our abatement process. The Environmental court docket is open to the public and we encourage citizens to come and observe the judicial process. Neighbors can also preset testimony before the court concerning cases which are impacting the neighborhood. This is especially helpful in situations where we have a repeat violator.

### *A History of Codes Administration Airs On Channel 3*



"A History of Codes Part I" began broadcasting on Metro Channel 3 (Comcast Cable Channel 3) in October.

"A History of Codes, Part I & II" are the first two episodes in a series of 10 programs that will highlight the Department of Codes and the role that it has played in the evolution of Nashville into a major American city.

"This series provides an opportunity for the public to see the contribution that the Codes Department has made as it addresses building and public safety issues as well as quality of life issues that have affected the community," said Terry Cobb, director of Codes and Building Safety.

Cobb, who has served as the Director of Codes Administration since 1990, believes that this series will go a long way toward answering many questions that the public may have regarding Codes Administration and its policies.

The series title, "The Metro Department of Codes and Building Safety Presents..." will be produced in cooperation with Metro Channel 3 and marks the first time that a program concerning Codes Administration has been featured on the local government channel.

Upcoming programs include, "The Structure of Codes", "Rehab Codes & Downtown Redevelopment", "Responsive & Pro-Active Code Enforcement", "The Other Public Safety Agency" and "Zoning 101".

## Neighborhoods Organized To Initiate Codes Enforcement (NOTICE) Program

### Community based— Pro-Active Codes Enforcement

How many times have you noticed something in your neighborhood which brought down its appearance? We've all seen that abandoned vehicles or the house with old furniture and junk scattered in the yard. And you've probably wondered, "Is there something I can do about that?"

Now you can! The Neighborhoods organized to Initiate Codes Enforcement (NOTICE) program is a pro-active community based program designed to help citizens identify and report codes violations in their neighborhood. The NOTICE program allows citizens to assist in the identification of codes violations. Neighbors can now become directly involved in the process that helps improve and maintain their own neighborhoods.

This volunteer based program is only available to organized neighborhood groups, associations or neighborhood watch groups. It's organized around a volunteer inspection "Team" of neighbors who are trained on how to identify a limited set of possible Property Standards code violations. To join the program we need at least four persons to form the inspection team. After completing a short application, the team is trained on how to conduct inspections and on how to use the specialized inspection worksheet. This worksheet takes the information the volunteer sees and turns it into the abate notice which goes to the property owner to notify them of the violation and asks for their cooperation. The forms are turned into codes where they are mailed to the property owners. The inspection team will go back to re-inspect the violations to see if they have been corrected and will report those results to us. If the violation is corrected, the property owner is sent a thank you letter along with a copy of our "How to Be a Better Neighbor" guide. If the violation has not been corrected, the inspector for that area will make a third inspection and will request a warrant to environmental court if the property is still in violation.



The NOTICE program speeds-up the process to get from a violation to a correction. Over thirty of Nashville's organized neighborhood organizations have participated in the program since we began four years ago. Most of the groups are reporting a 40 to 60 percent correction rate from the program notices. And it involves the neighborhood in helping codes to improve the community. To obtain additional information or to request an application, call the Property Standards division at 862-6590 or visit us on the web at: [http://www.nashville.gov/codes/services\\_notice.html](http://www.nashville.gov/codes/services_notice.html).

## Employee Highlights

Ron Mitchell, Property Standards Inspection Chief, is the Red Team supervisor directly responsible for management of the day-to-day inspection activities for 5 Property Standards Inspectors. Mr. Mitchell has been employed with the Department of Codes Administration for twenty years. He began as one of the departments Housing Inspectors and was promoted to Property Standards Inspection Chief in 2006.



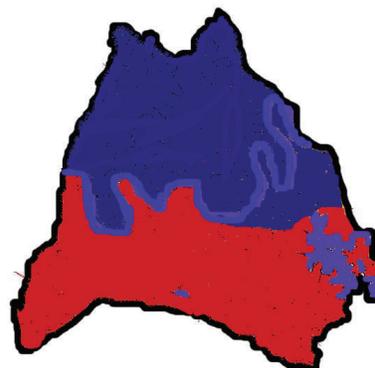
The county is divided into ten inspection areas, one assigned to each of our ten inspectors. The Red Team's area is the entire county south of the Cumberland River to the Williamson and Rutherford County lines. Ron's focus is on providing a timely and accurate response to customer requests. He encourages his inspectors to work their assigned areas in a pro-active fashion by looking at their areas systematically.

Mr. Mitchell is also a licensed ordained Minister of the Gospel and has served as Senior Pastor of New Livingstone Church for the past twenty-five years. In this capacity he has performed several counseling sessions, led prayer groups and has officiated marriage ceremonies for several Codes employees.

A graduate of the Metro Management Institute and Metro Results Matters Managing for Results, Mr. Mitchell is one of several Program Champions in the department. In this capacity he is responsible for the "Better Neighborhoods" programs focusing on leading the department's efforts to remove visual clutter (i.e. signs, debris, trash, and graffiti), reducing the number of abandoned, inoperable and unlicensed vehicles, and reducing the number of substandard properties in Nashville Davidson County.

Mr. Mitchell is affiliated with several Civic and Ministerial Groups and during Minority Enterprise Development Week of 2006 was the recipient of the RH Boyd Minority Business Advocate of the Year Award. He holds a Bachelors degree in Theology, a Masters Degree in Pastoral Ministry and holds several professional certifications in the Codes Profession.

An "avid tennis player" Mr. Mitchell is committed to being responsive and pro-active to the concerns of the citizens of Nashville. He and his staff appreciate the opportunity to provide pro-active, results oriented Code Enforcement.



To find out which inspection area you live in, call our Property Standards office 862-6590.

# Winter Safety Tips

## Preventing Frozen Pipes

An average of a quarter-million families have their home ruined and their lives disrupted each winter, all because of water pipes that freeze and burst. And recovering from frozen pipes is not as simple as calling a plumber. An 1/8th inch crack in a pipe can spew up to 250 gallons of water a day. Both plastic (PVC) and copper pipes can burst.

By taking a few simple precautions, you can save yourself the mess, money and aggravation that frozen pipes can cause.



### Before the cold hits -

**Insulate** pipes in your home's crawl spaces and attic. These exposed pipes are most susceptible to freezing. Remember—the more insulation you use, the better protected your pipes will be.

**Keep** garage doors closed if there are water supply lines in the garage.

**Heat tape** or thermostatically controlled heat cables can be used to wrap pipes. Be sure to use products approved by an independent testing organization, such as Underwriters Laboratories Inc., and only for the use intended (exterior or interior). Closely follow all manufacturers' installation and operation instructions.

**Seal** leaks that allow cold air inside near where pipes are located. Look for air leaks around electrical wiring, dryer vents and pipes. Use caulk or insulation to keep the cold out and the heat in. With severe cold, even a tiny opening can let in enough cold air to cause a pipe to freeze.

**Disconnect** garden hoses and, if practical, use an indoor valve to shut off and drain water from pipes leading to outside faucets. This reduces the chance of freezing in the short span of pipe just inside the house.



### When the mercury drops -

**A trickle** of hot and cold water might be all it takes to keep your pipes from freezing. Let warm water drip overnight, preferably from a faucet on an outside wall.

**Open** cabinet doors to allow heat to get to un-insulated pipes under sinks and appliances near exterior walls.

### Before you go away -

**Set** the thermostat in your house no lower than 55°F.

**Ask** a friend or neighbor to check your house daily to make sure it's warm enough to prevent freezing or .....

**Shut off** and drain the water system. Be aware that if you have a fire protection sprinkler system in your house, it will be deactivated when you shut off the water.

### If your pipes freeze -

**Don't take chances.** If you turn on your faucets and nothing comes out, leave the faucets turned on and call a plumber. If you detect that your water pipes have frozen and burst, turn off the water at the main shut-off valve in the house; leave the water faucets turned on. (Make sure everyone in your family knows where the water shut-off valve is and how to open and close it.)



**Never** try to thaw a pipe with a torch or other open flame. Water damage is preferable to burning down your house. You may be able to thaw a frozen pipe with the warm air from a hair dryer. Start by warming the pipe as close to the faucet as possible, working toward the coldest section of pipe. **Do not** use electrical appliances in areas of standing water because you could be electrocuted.

## NEW LEGISLATION!

### New Rules for Boats and Trailers

The Metro Council passed an ordinance which has changed the rules concerning watercraft (boats) and trailers. The ordinance changed to Section 16.24.330 by adding a new paragraph "P". The new regulations prohibit trailers or watercraft parked in the front yard of the property. Trailers and watercraft must be stored on a paved or graveled driveway, or behind the front façade of the residential structure.

A trailer is defined as "...every non-motorized vehicle drawn by a motor vehicle designed for carrying or transporting persons or property." A watercraft is defined as "...every vessel used or capable of being used as a means of transporting persons on water, including motorized and non-motorized devices."

This regulation affects boats of all types, jet skis, and trailers, including pop-up campers and other towed travel trailers. Motorized travel trailers would have to conform to the same requirements for motorized vehicles on private property which requires them to be parked on a hard surface, have a current metal license plate, and must be fully operational. To view the actual ordinance, go to: <http://www.nashville.gov/mc/search.asp> or call the Property Standards division at 862-6590.



## Parks Department Opens Two Community Centers

### *Opening and Dedication of the new Parkwood Community Center*

The new 14,000 square foot, \$2 million facility is an innovative, state of the art facility that features a climbing wall, fitness center, computer lab, gymnasium, and a game and multi-purpose room. Park improvements include a quarter-mile walking track, a new playground, and refurbished tennis court. Opening ceremonies were held on November 3rd at the center. Mayor Purcell was joined by Councilman Walter Hunt in dedicating the new center.

### *Hartman Community Center Reopened On November 6*

Originally dedicated in 1983, the Richard Hartman Park Community Center has now been renovated and expanded. The 30,000 square foot facility includes a fitness center, indoor walking track, several multipurpose meeting rooms, an air conditioned gymnasium, game room, kitchen, and a five-lane indoor pool. New site improvements include expanded parking, a wider and resurfaced walking trail loop, new outdoor basketball courts, sidewalks, site furnishings, and new landscaping that features over 75 new trees.

## **J.U.M.P.**

### **Jefferson Street United Merchants Partnership, Inc.**

will be holding the 8th Annual Christmas Extravaganza and Candlelight Award Celebration on December 3rd at 6:00 p.m. The Celebration will be held at 15th Avenue Baptist Church, 1203 9th Avenue, North, Nashville, TN 37208.

The event is sponsored by the 15th Avenue Baptist Church, Nissan and Infiniti.

### **Candlelight Awardees:**

2006 Jefferson Street Jazz & Blues Festival Committee: Joe Johnson, Victor Chatman, Nikki Parram-Thibaud, Mary Ann Nelson, Brenda Ross. Also, Debra Alexander-Fisher (Alexander & Associates), Margaret McClain (Nashville OIC), Kelvin D. Jones (Metro Human Relations Commission), The Guess Family.

### **The Community Advocate Award:**

Smith Brothers Funeral Home

### **The Vintage Award:**

The Christman Family - (R&R Liquors)

Please call 726-5867 for more details

## Fall Leaf Collections Begin

Beginning Tuesday, November 28, Public Works crews will travel Metro's 12 brush routes picking up bagged leaves left at the curb or in alleys. Crews will make a second sweep of the routes in January.

You should have bagged leaves out by the first day of collection in your area, use only paper or plastic biodegradable bags, and place them where your trash is collected. Satellite cities (Belle Meade, Forest Hills, Oak Hill, Berry Hill, Lakewood and Goodlettsville) are not included in Metro's leaf collection program.

There are several ways to dispose of leaves. They can be mulched in place by a lawn mower, piled up in your yard for composting, or set out in bags for Metro's collection service. Whatever you choose to do, please don't rake your leaves into the street where they may plug up storm drains or cause other problems.

Until the end of December, you can also take bagged leaves to Metro's Bordeaux mulch facility at 1400 County Hospital Road free of charge. If your leaves are bagged in plastic, please plan to take the bags back home with you. Plastic bags will not be accepted with your leaves. In January, there will be a minimal charge to dispose of bagged leaves.

For more information, call 880-1000, or visit [www.nashville.gov/recycle](http://www.nashville.gov/recycle) for a more complete list of leaf collection guidelines.



## **Christmas Tree Lighting**

Mayor Bill Purcell will launch Nashville's holiday season by lighting the city's Holiday tree on Thursday, December 2, at 5:00 p.m. in the Court of Flags located at downtown's Riverfront Park on First Avenue.

This year's tree is a Norway spruce which stands more than 30 feet tall. Found growing in the yard of a home near Music Row, the tree only has a short distance to travel from its current home on Sigler Avenue to Riverfront Park where it will serve as the centerpiece of the City's holiday celebrations.

Following closely on the heels of the tree lighting ceremony, Mayor Purcell will participate in the 52nd Annual Nashville Gas Christmas Parade.

The tree lighting is open to the public and free of charge.

We hope to see you there!





## Everyone Loves a Parade!

It's that time again - its time for the 54th annual Nashville Gas Christmas Parade !

This year the parade will be sponsored by Southeast Financial Federal Credit Union. It will be held on Friday, December 1, 2006 and will start at 7:00.

We are proud to announce that the Grand Marshall will be Lorrie Morgan.



The parade will start at 7th and Broadway, will proceed east on Broadway down to 2nd Avenue. Then it will cross over the Victory Memorial Bridge, ending at the LP Field.



There will be 12 bands, 28 floats and 40 elements (clowns, horse riders, mini cars, etc.) included in the parade.

Additionally, fro 6:30—7:00, there will be a choir located at 7th and Broadway singing Christmas Carols.

So wrap up the kids, get a thermos of coffee or hot chocolate, and please join us as we welcome an ongoing tradition here in Nashville, and have a wonderful time and entertainment for no cost!



## HOLIDAY LIGHTS COMPETITION IS HERE AGAIN!

Nashville residents are invited to share the holiday spirit by decorating their homes and yards for the Metro Beautification and Environment Commission's 19<sup>th</sup> annual Holiday Lights Competition.

The contest is sponsored by Mayor Bill Purcell, Metro Public Works, Metro Beautification and Environment Commission, Nashville Electric Service and NewsChannel 5.

The Holiday Lights Competition is open to all residents of Davidson County, and awards are made in each of the 35 Councilmanic districts. Five regional winners and one countywide winner will be selected, as well.



The deadline for entering is Monday, November 20, 2006. Judging begins on Friday, November 24. The overall winner will be announced and featured on NewsChannel 5's 6:00 p.m. newscast on Friday, December 1.



For more information, call Metro Beautification at 862-8418, or visit [www.nashville.gov/beautification](http://www.nashville.gov/beautification). Contest rules and entry forms are available on the Metro website.

**Terry Cobb** and **Bill Penn** welcome your feedback on our e-newsletter. Please send your comments to [Bill Penn](mailto:Bill.Penn), Assistant Director, Property Standards Div., 862-6516



For information regarding accessibility, please contact Manley Biggers at (615) 862-6521 or fax (615) 862-6499. He can also be reached at [manley.biggers@nashville.gov](mailto:manley.biggers@nashville.gov)

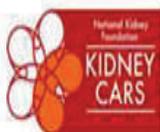
## It's Time to Junk Your Junker!



- Your donation may be eligible for a tax deduction!
- Comply with Metro Property Standards Code: *"...inoperable, unlicensed or unregistered motor vehicles shall not be openly parked, kept or stored on any premises."*
- A clean and beautiful area improves safety and property values.
- Kidney Cars increase reuse, steel recycling and remove air polluting old cars.
- Proceeds go to patient service, education, research & organ donor awareness.

Donate your car, boat, truck or motor home to the **National Kidney Foundation's Kidney Car program**. The funds will save lives.

For more information call 1-800-488-CARS (2277).



Metro-Nashville  
**PUBLIC WORKS**

## Department of Codes and Building Safety



Metro Office Building  
800 2nd Ave, South  
Nashville, TN 37210  
615-862-6590 / Fax 862-6593

**Mayor - Bill Purcell**

Director - Terry Cobb  
Assistant Director - Bill Penn

Office Hours: Mon-Fri / 7:30-4:00