



# City Newsletter

## WAUWATOSA

Winter 2023



### Tree Collection

Did you have a real Christmas tree this year? We collect real trees (not artificial trees) on the curb between January 3 - 27, 2023. We turn the trees into mulch.

Please remove all decorations. We don't take trees in bags or wreaths.

Questions? Call Public Works: (414) 471-8422

If you have other holiday garbage or recycling questions, use the Waste Wizard to see if it should be thrown away, recycled, composted or reused: [wauwatosa.net/wizard](http://wauwatosa.net/wizard). Examples: Christmas lights, old electronics, eggnog cartons, bubble wrap, and more.

### Eliminating Overdue Fines at the Wauwatosa Public Library

As a means to improve access to the library, the Wauwatosa Library Board made the decision that the Wauwatosa Public Library will no longer collect overdue fines on young adult and adult materials, effective January 1, 2023. The board previously eliminated fines on children's library materials in 2019.

Our research shows that fines do not have any impact on return rates. Additionally, the American Library Association passed a resolution in 2019 that monetary fines present an economic barrier to access of library materials and services and encouraged libraries to scrutinize fines for potential barriers to access. Since eliminating fines on children's library materials in late 2019, we have seen an increase in usage of children's library materials, and we believe a significant part of this success was due to the elimination of fees.

Patrons will no longer be assessed overdue fines on young adult and adult library materials that are returned late, and existing overdue fines on those materials are being waived.

To be clear, patrons will still be charged for unreturned items, and they won't be able to check out any additional materials until they return the items or pay the replacement fee. The Wauwatosa Public Library sends reminders when a due date approaches and has passed. These come in the form of a text, email, or phone call, depending on your communication preferences. Those with existing overdue fines on Wauwatosa young adult or adult library materials will not have to pay those fines.

If you request an item and it comes from another branch, there may still be overdue fees, as those materials are from another library.

Eliminating overdue fines on young adult and adult materials adds \$24,000 per year to the Library's portion of the city budget. The impact of this increase on the property tax bill of an average home would be \$0.93 per year, or \$0.08 per month.

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## City of Wauwatosa Elected Officials

### MAYOR

Dennis McBride  
mayor@wauwatosa.net  
(414) 479-8915

### DISTRICT 1

James Moldenhauer  
jmoldenhauer@wauwatosa.net  
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Andrew Meindl  
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### DISTRICT 2

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John Dubinski  
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### DISTRICT 3

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Robin Brannin  
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### DISTRICT 4

Ernst Franzen  
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(414) 510-5575  
David R. Lewis  
dlewis@wauwatosa.net  
(414) 312-3478

### DISTRICT 5

Sean Lowe  
slowe@wauwatosa.net  
(262) 269-1536  
Joel Tilleson  
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(414) 316-2120

### DISTRICT 6

Joe Phillips  
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(414) 215-9191  
Meagan O'Reilly  
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### DISTRICT 7

Mike Morgan  
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(414) 335-9467  
Amanda Fuerst  
afuerst@wauwatosa.net  
(262) 372-1060

### DISTRICT 8

Jason Wilke  
jwilke@wauwatosa.net  
(414) 520-1962  
Melissa Dolan  
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(414) 704-5610



## Mayor's Corner

### Message from Mayor Dennis McBride

As we begin a new year in Wauwatosa, we have much to look forward to. All year long, our businesses, schools, civic organizations, and Tourism Commission bring us fun events, even in our coldest

months. Meanwhile, our city government is hard at work. While we've kept our property tax rate increase well below the rate of inflation, we will take on new initiatives that will improve life for all Wauwatosans. Among these will be a new park on 116th Street, upgrades to our roads and water system, and investments in new positions to make all our departments function more effectively.

Our city employees do a terrific job of providing the basic services we all rely on, collecting our garbage and recycling, plowing our streets, protecting our homes, and a long list of other essential activities. Their energy and commitment keep Wauwatosa on a great path so that everyone – neighbors, visitors, and friends – can enjoy what our hometown has to offer. The next time you see city workers, please give them your thanks.

## Tosa's Voices: Podcast Episodes

Tosa's Voices is a podcast featuring residents, city staff, and volunteers on the City of Wauwatosa's 30+ citizen committees. We like to "explain the why" behind city services, feature cool projects led by volunteers, and get you informed about what's happening in Wauwatosa.



"We are exploring this form of media because we know people learn in different ways. Sometimes there are city topics that are better explained through an informal conversation. Plus – we have some very involved citizen committee members who are leading interesting projects to better the community. We're going to tell their stories," said Eva Ennamorato, communications manager.

In its first few months, the podcast has had episodes about planning for the new veteran's memorial in Hart Park, suggestions on getting quality contractors for your home projects, residents asking us questions about the city budget, and what it's like to attend the Citizen's Police Academy.

You can access the podcast through common podcasting services like Samsung, iHeartRadio, Amazon Music/Audible, Audacy, and other services.



CITY OF WAUWATOSA

# News in Brief



## \* In-Person Absentee Voting Hours

In-person absentee voting (also known as "early voting") at City Hall generally occurs the two weeks prior to the election in the City Clerk's Office during normal business hours. For the 2023 Spring Primary Election, the hours of In-person absentee voting will be:

February 7-10: 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

February 13-16: 8:00 am to 4:30 pm

February 17: 8:00 am to 5:00 pm

## \* Wauwatosa receives grant to promote ART 64 event

The City of Wauwatosa has received a Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) grant from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism for up to \$22,086 of funding to market our two-day interactive summer painting event known as ART 64. Artists from across the country will gather in the Wauwatosa Village to compete in a bracket-style tournament; the event is judged by all attendees. All artists receive participation awards and the winner receives \$20,000 in a grand prize. Thirty percent of the proceeds from any paintings sold go to the Wauwatosa Parks Improvement Fund. Mark your calendar for June 9-10, 2023.

## \* Citizen's Police Academy Returns

The Wauwatosa Police Department is hosting another Citizen's Police Academy in early 2023. There will be lectures, demonstrations, practical exercises, and open discussion provided by members of the Wauwatosa Police Department along with guest speakers. Presentation topics include crash investigations, K9, criminal investigations, and a tour of the police department. Additional activities involve hands-on participation, such as traffic stops, use of force exercises, OWI enforcement, firearms, and emergency vehicle instruction. See photos and videos of the citizen's police academy on the police's social media accounts.

## \* Do you have water in your basement? Check out this MMSD resource:

Water in your basement can be caused by rain or groundwater, also known as clear water, overwhelming your sanitary lateral pipe and causing sewage and water to back up in your basement. Sources of clear water include connected downspouts, foundation drains, and defects in your sanitary lateral such as cracks in the pipe. MMSD's Pipe Check program provides financial incentives to help homeowners eliminate sources of clear water from their homes at a reduced cost. Contact MMSD for more information: (414) 225-2250 or PipeCheckInfo@MMSD.com.



## Water Rate Increase in 2023

The water utility is regulated by the Public Service Commission, similar to We Energies. Rate increases are limited to 3% simplified increases or a conventional rate increase. There are limits to how frequently we can implement simplified and conventional rate increases. It's been five years since Wauwatosa's last conventional rate increase, and we are no longer permitted to apply for a simplified rate increase.

Since 2017, our costs have increased 28% (not adjusted for inflation) while our revenues have increased 3%. A few examples of our costs include diggers hotline locates, debt service for infrastructure, and wages for our water staff who fix water main breaks and service water lines throughout the city. Our costs also include water infrastructure, and Wauwatosa has aging infrastructure in comparison to other communities. In fact, 30% of our water mains were built in the 1940s or earlier.

We have applied for a rate increase, but we don't have an official date of when this rate will be implemented or the exact rate yet. These factors will be decided by the Public Service Commission as well as impacted by how the City of Milwaukee proposes a rate increase. We anticipate this increase impacting customers in 2023.

We recognize that this increase affects our customers. Wauwatosa is enrolled in programs that provide financial assistance to those who qualify based on their income. Check out Wisconsin Help for Homeowners and the Wisconsin Department of Administration - Low Income Household Water Assistance Program. We are exploring additional options to assist with affordability.

One way you can monitor your water usage is to log into your water account. You can also sign up for Eye on Water to receive text and email alerts if a leak is detected in your account. Make sure to check on leaks before it leads to a costly bill.

## What Do My Property Taxes Support?

Wauwatosa property owners received their 2022 tax bill in the mail in December. You can also view your tax bill online ([wauwatosa.net/taxes](http://wauwatosa.net/taxes)).

Notice that 31.1% of your total taxes support the City of Wauwatosa. The remaining amount supports Milwaukee County, Wauwatosa School District, Milwaukee Area Technical College, and the Metropolitan Milwaukee Sewer District.

Some people may not realize that although you pay your tax bill to the City, not all of it stays with us. The city portion of your tax bill supports an array of services. For an average Wauwatosa home valued at \$271,000, the monthly bill for city services is \$162.33. Roughly half of that (\$78.55) supports police and fire protection. \$12.56 per month supports Public Works services like garbage, recycling, yard waste, and leaf collection. \$9.39 supports Library services. View more information about what your tax bill supports in our annual Financial Snapshot.



## Property Tax Due Dates

Did you know that you can pay your property taxes in interest-free installments? Pay the portioned amount listed on your bill by January 31, March 31, and May 31. These are interest-free, and there is no application process – you just have to make the indicated payment by each due date.

To avoid any interest or penalties, your next installment must be USPS postmarked, paid on the City website, or received by the Treasurer's Office on or before the due date.

CITY OF WAUWATOSA

# Construction & Development News



## North Avenue Construction 2023

In 2023, there will be significant construction on North Avenue between Met To Wee to Mayfair Road. The project will include reconstruction of the road, utility replacement, bicycle lanes, and stormwater infrastructure. There will be additional details to share later in early 2023 about this project. This will be an impactful project. Please consider subscribing to project updates at [wauwatosa.net/NorthAve](http://wauwatosa.net/NorthAve)

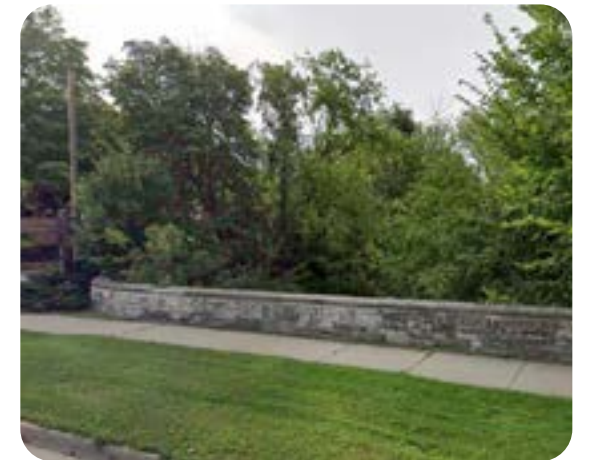


## Wisconsin Avenue Bridge Replacement in 2025

The purpose of this project is to replace a structurally deficient bridge that has reached the end of its useful life. We are also raising the roadway and bridge to alleviate flooding. Wauwatosa was recently notified that the state will contribute approximately \$2.8 million in funding for this infrastructure project. This additional funding will allow us to raise the bridge out of the floodplain. The design may allow for a pedestrian underpass along the creek. The bridge has some historic design elements to it that Wauwatosa will seek to preserve in its reconstruction.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) and City of Wauwatosa held a public involvement meeting for the Wisconsin Avenue Bridge Replacement over Honey Creek in December 2022.

Go to [wauwatosa.net/bridge](http://wauwatosa.net/bridge) to download documents, including renderings of the bridge.



## New City Park at 116th and Gilbert Avenue

The Common Council allocated \$4 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to implement the Active Tosa Plan. All ARPA funds must be obligated no later than December 31st, 2024. This means projects must be designed, bid, and under contract by the end of 2024. The corner of 116th & Gilbert is identified in the Active Tosa plan as a site for a new city park. We anticipate starting grading work on the park area in 2023. Construction on the park features may not happen until 2024.



## Sign up for Construction News

Do you want to stay connected with what is going on in Wauwatosa? We offer several options for email lists. Log on to [wauwatosa.net/construction](http://wauwatosa.net/construction) for more information.



## The Evolution of Public Health in Wauwatosa

Laura Stephens, Health Officer/Director for the city, recently presented the Health Department budget. Stephens shared how the Health Department has utilized American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. These funds have allowed for three specialists to be hired: 1) a shared social worker with the Police and Fire Departments, focuses on community members in crisis, assists individuals find support, and works with adult protective services; 2) a youth mental health social worker has been active in the Wauwatosa area public and private schools; 3) a substance use specialist who is implementing harm reduction tactics such as providing the community with fentanyl test strips and Narcan.

The Health Department has identified Public Health 3.0 as a guide for their strategic plan going forward. Public Health 3.0 is a national approach that aims to discover and reduce the impact of systemic forces on individual's health.

"We call them Social Determinates of Health. So, someone's education could affect their health outcomes, what job they have, the neighborhood they live in, the house they live in," Stephens said, "all of those other things affect their health and their ability to have the same opportunities to have positive health outcomes." Part of this strategy includes making budgetary changes to hire a Public Health Specialist. In 2023 and 2024, this budget change would be completely covered by ARPA grants; going forward the funding would gradually shift to being 50% grant funded and 50% tax funded. "We see these systems that affect people's choices when it comes to health outcomes that they see," Stephens explained, "this Public Health position will really try to look at some of those systems outside of an individual's control."

## Save the Date!

Jan 19 \*  
Music and Cultural Tour of Ireland at Celtic MKE Center

Feb 10 \*  
Guinness, Chocolate, and Bluegrass at Celtic MKE Center

Feb 16 \* 10 am - 11:30 am  
Blood Pressure Screening at City Hall

Feb 21 \* 7 am - 8 pm  
Election Day - Spring Primary

Mar 11 \* 10 am  
Lucky Leprechaun 7K

Mar 23 - Apr 1 \*  
Tosa Restaurant Week at participating restaurants

Mar 30 \* 1:30 - 6:30 pm  
Blood Drive at City Hall

Apr 4 \* 7 am - 8 pm  
Election Day - Spring General

Apr 22 \*  
Riverkeeper Spring Clean up at multiple locations



## ➔ Ways to Engage

ONLINE: Visit us at [www.wauwatosa.net](http://www.wauwatosa.net)

IN PERSON: Visit us Monday-Friday, from 8 am - 4:30 pm at City Hall  
7725 W. North Avenue | Wauwatosa, WI 53213

BY PHONE: Call us at (414) 479-8900

BY SOCIAL MEDIA:



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