



# The City News Express

2011

Connecting Austell Government With Its Citizens

Summer

## From the Mayor and Council

### No Tax Increase; No Layoffs

Dear Residents,

This year our weather has gone from one extreme to another - frigid lows in winter and scorching highs in summer, but our city government has remained steady.

The national financial crisis has had an impact on Austell just as it has on other cities throughout the country. Our 2011 - 2012 budget has been one of the tightest in years. Increased healthcare costs for our employees and decreased revenues from Austell Gas have contributed to our budget crunch.

Working with our Finance Department, chaired by Virginia Reagan, we cut almost \$1,000,000 in expenses in order to have a balanced budget going into 2012. Because of cost effective reductions and careful spending, we have not had to lay off any employees, and Austell can still maintain a high level of service to our citizens without a tax increase.

We are still dealing with the effects of Flood 2009. Of the twenty-three homes to be purchased by GEMA, nineteen have closed to date, and the City's portion of the purchase price of these homes is \$144,889.80. These were the only homes that met the requirements of FEMA Guidelines for purchase. According to EPA regulations, once a home has been deemed to meet these requirements, the property can never be built on again. Therefore, Austell will acquire all of these lots to be used as green space and passive parks for its citizens.

Legion Park re-opened on May 18th, and Council Members as well as many from the community came for the official ribbon cutting. Due to the generosity of Lowes, Georgia Power and 11 Alive News, Legion Park looks better than ever and is being enjoyed by people of all ages! The City presented a Proclamation of Appreciation to each of these companies at the park on May 18th.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank each of you who voted for the 2011 SPLOST. Since the Special Local Option Sales Tax passed, we will be able to make improvements to the City of Austell that would have been impossible, particularly under the current economic conditions. With the monies available from SPLOST, over the next five years we plan to purchase a new Fire Truck, several new Police cruisers, upgrade our parks, accomplish much needed paving for some of our streets and add sidewalks in several locations.



Your Public Servant,  
*Joe Jerkins, Mayor*

#### Council Members

Ward 1 - Kirsten Anderson    Ward 3 - Martin Standard  
Ward 2 - Scott Thomas    Ward 4 - Virginia Reagan

At Large Post 1 - Trudie A. Causey  
At Large Post 2 -Randy Green

## Fire Department

Scott Thomas, Chairman



Fire Lieutenant George Bach, left, and Fire Chief Tim Williams

Congratulations to Chief Tim Williams and Lt. George Bach who were honored for their years of service to the City of Austell, Chief Williams for 30 years and Lt. Bach for 35 years.

Again this year, the citizens of Austell helped raise money to fight Muscular Dystrophy through our annual Boot Drive - \$4,627.00.

Many thanks to all who gave!

Our Firefighters held two days of "Live Fire" training at the Austell Training Facility located next to the City of Austell Threadmill Complex. This is part of the Core Competency Training mandated by the State of Georgia.



Firefighter Brandon Merritt holds thermal camera at Core Competency mandated training.

**Reminder:** The statewide burning ban remains in effect until October 1st.. After that date, our City Ordinance allows attended burning of leaves and small yard debris Monday through Saturday between 8 am and 5 pm. No Sunday burning.

## Parks Department

Randy Green, Chairman

After its official opening, Legion Park has been a busy place. Youth baseball teams have tournaments in the park on weekends; young and old jog or walk every day and families are enjoying the pavilion. Once again, Legion Park is a gathering place for our citizens.



Council Members (from left) Scott Thomas, Kirsten Anderson, Trudie Causey and Virginia Reagan join residents at the ribbon cutting ceremony at Legion Park.

Austell  
Community  
Market & Bazaar



Please visit our Downtown Business District on Saturday, September 24th between 8 am and 3 pm. Local merchants and vendors are hosting a fantastic Sidewalk Sale featuring fresh home grown produce, arts and crafts, approved Yard Sale items, food and much more!

Come stroll through our quaint shops, enjoy the day in Austell, and support our local merchants. See you there!

If you have questions, or would like to be an approved vendor, please call our office at 770-944-4309.

## Public Works Department

Martin Standard, Chairman



## Stormwater Utility Fees

For more than a decade, Austell residents have paid a one dollar monthly fee for stormwater management services. Because of increased Federal, State and Local mandates, this fee is no longer sufficient to support Austell's Stormwater Management program and services.

On August 12, 2010, the Mayor and Council approved an increase of \$2 for all residents. Commercial businesses will pay according to the size of their impervious land surface.

These additional funds enable us to keep up with the requirements that have been mandated, as well as allowing us to complete drainage system assessments, inspections, maintenance and repair of the city's storm sewer system, litter pick-up, business inspections, public education and minor flood reduction projects.

Rather than having to pay the Stormwater Utility fee each month, effective in October, a total of \$36.00 will just be added to your city tax bill.

### Annual Fall Clean-up

October is Clean-Up Month in Austell! From October 3rd through the 31st, the city will pick up items that are not accepted in regular trash pick-up throughout the year. Our staff cannot go onto private property, so all items for collection must be at curbside.



Remember, Austell Public Works will take appliances, washers, dryers and hot water heaters all during the year, but now is a great time to clean out your attic or basement. A complete list of items that cannot be accepted due to Federal and State laws can be found on our website, but a few are: light ballast; asbestos; metal drums; paint cans; household garbage; tires and building materials. Go to [www.austellga.gov](http://www.austellga.gov) and click on eGOV Services for the list.

## Community Affairs

Trudie Causey, Chairman



## Streetscape II is Planned for Austell

Over the past decade, a series of projects that have enhanced and beautified Austell are: the sidewalks for US 78/VMH, Sweetwater Creek Trail and Phase I of the downtown Streetscape. These have all been completed with the aid of federal and state grants along with matching funds from the city. More than \$2 million dollars in grant money along with \$525,500.00 in matching funds from the City have been well spent in Austell!

Now, it's time to begin work on the Streetscape Project - Phase II. The construction contract has been let, and the low bid has been submitted to ARC for approval. The scope of the project includes Broad St., Mulberry St., Joe Jerkins Blvd. and Sweetwater St. New sidewalks, curbing, crosswalks, lighting, additional parking spaces, landscaping, park benches, bike racks and trash receptacles are on the agenda as well as re-striping existing parking spaces. Barring inclement weather or unforeseen delays, the completion time is approximately six months from the time it's begun.

## The Austell Business Association and the City of Austell Sponsor 5th Annual Concert in the Park

On Saturday, September 10th come join your friends and neighbors at Collar Park for a day of fun and music! The Concert is in remembrance of 9/11 and will feature *Al Holley, Gospel Artist*, who will perform at 12 noon; *The Ramblin' Grass* who will perform at 3 pm and *Rambunctious* who will perform at 6 pm. This is a FREE community event and full concessions are available as well as face painting for the children. Bring a blanket or a lawn chair and enjoy the day! *No Alcoholic Beverages Allowed.*

## Police Department

Virginia Reagan, Chairman

## Austell Police Officer Korey Wood Real Life Hero



The Austell Police Department has a history of going above and beyond to maintain law and order in our city. Just the Officers' visibility is certainly a deterrent to crime, but when necessary they take action! Police Officers are never really off duty, and sometimes they are called upon to react quickly in unexpected situations.

On the morning of August 3rd, Officer Korey Wood was confronted with just such a situation. He was off duty in the Kohl's Shopping Center and assisted Cobb County Officer Timothy Haas with an arrest. Following is a letter from Officer Haas:

"...I want to commend Officer Korey Scott Wood for his actions on August 3, 2011. To put the scenario in perspective, I was confronting an armed robber who a few minutes earlier had robbed the Taco Bell located at the intersection of Austell Road and Mulkey Road. I was alone when I first confronted the suspect and was giving the suspect verbal commands at gunpoint. The suspect then decided to flee on foot. I transitioned to my taser and fired at the suspect, but missed him with one probe. As I was chasing the suspect, Officer Wood got out of his POV and announced that he was the Police and for the suspect to stop. The suspect is a considerable amount larger than Officer Wood, but he stood in front of the suspect refusing to yield to the fleeing felon. He braced himself for impact. The suspect folded his arms in front and hit Officer Wood at a full sprint, sending them both tumbling to the ground.....Officer Wood's actions were courageous to say the least. When I talked with him, he was very humble, and said when he had first seen me alone with the suspect at gunpoint he decided to help...his actions resulted in me being able to close the gap resulting in the arrest of a wanted felon ....He didn't back away from an unknown and dangerous situation and was willing to go the distance to help another police officer.

What he did is not common place for most Police Officers now, and his actions are to be commended."

Captain Jeff Adcock, Precinct II Commander, Cobb County Police Department also commended Korey for assisting in the capture of the felon who was still in possession of \$1,900 in cash. We are very proud of our own Korey Wood!

**Korey Wood recognized at Sheriff's Association - Cobb County Law Enforcement meeting on August 18th.**



(L-R) Ofc. Timothy Haas, Deputy Chief Natalie Poulk, Ofc. Korey Wood and Deputy Chief Cobb County Police Ron Storey.

**City Election: November 8th Polls are open 7 AM - 7 PM  
Voting Location: City Hall**