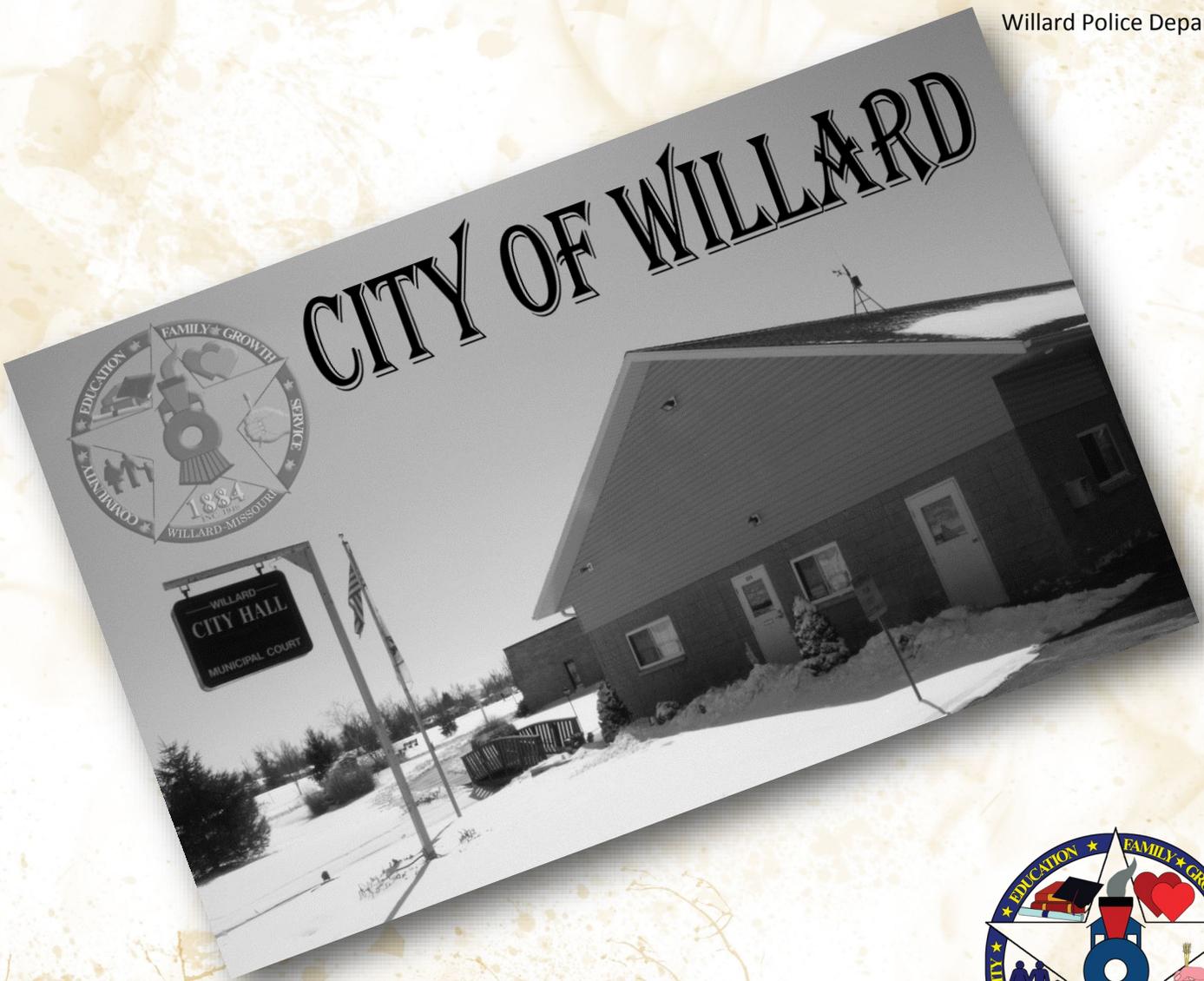


Issue
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February
2017

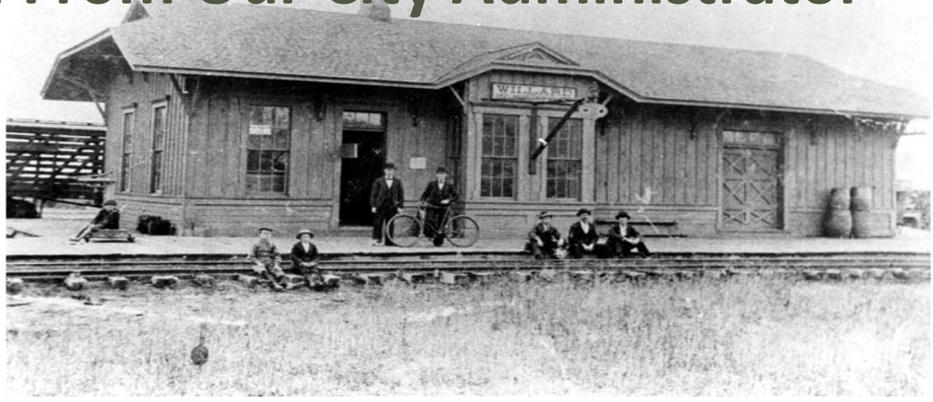
Willard Watch

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A Word From Our City Administrator



In early September of 2016, as I was only in my first month as City Administrator, I was introduced to a long-burning City of Willard issue...namely the "old downtown". Long-burning...in that a community survey taken as early as 1990 showed a strong public desire to "clean up" the old downtown. And as a closer look was taken into that survey, one could infer a public desire for some kind of new commerce to be brought into the "old downtown." Yet for nearly 30 years, nothing of any real significance had happened to change the nature, or the appearance, of "old downtown" Willard. A few cosmetic efforts, but nothing significant. And as the newly appointed interim City Administrator, the question for me was simply too overpowering...Why not? Why had nothing of any real significance happened to downtown Willard in 30 years, especially if the public had indicated a desire for it to be addressed?

Answers began to appear along with a host of additional questions. What history...what sociology...were at play in the mix of "old downtown" challenges? Had anything been tried? How were the remnants of original downtown commerce staying alive and in business? What kinds of business had come and gone?

And in the Fall of 2016, there was a general acceptance...among the businesses of downtown and including among elected officials...that the downtown issues were simply going to remain as downtown issues. Nobody seemed to be ready to throw the first rock in the pond to start ripples. No one wanted to waste his own money unless everyone was going to move on the idea. So stagnation.....

There was conversation in town, and even at Board of Aldermen meetings, suggesting moneys should be invested to "fix" downtown. One such conversation included an annual figure of \$50,000 which might ought to be spent on "economic development" especially focusing on old downtown. Other conversations shared the hopefulness of the Greenways Trails work in downtown.

Their focus on cleanup and plantings plus some trailhead development and parking areas were making a noticeable difference...although small and slow to arrive. And there was discussion as to what, if anything, the Willard Chamber of Commerce might be able to do in and for "old downtown." And whether it could become a real player in the commerce of Willard.

As I saw all of this in September 2016, I was also confronted with a reality that the City Parks Department had woefully insufficient building space out of which to operate. I had also recognized that the Public Works Department's building, located immediately off Jackson Street, was not only insufficient but completely in the wrong kind of location for a public works operation. And then I learned that the windowless block building owned by Greenways Trails was actually being rented by the City for a maintenance/storage function.

As the pieces of the dilemma began to identify themselves, some options started to show through the clutter. Greenways properties could actually be bought...The Greenways trail function was fairly well fixed and the rest of the Willard story could be Willards'. And the rest of that story involved a real desire to rebuild the old depot into the history of downtown. And maybe that history is the future of old downtown Willard.

Basing some potential community enthusiasm on the return of the old depot structure, involving seniors, families, businesses, social clubs, the City, and the banks, couldn't this event be precisely the kind of community event which could bring the population of Willard together as a community? Could this bring community pride? If so, how to make it happen?

"THAT HISTORY IS THE FUTURE OF OLD DOWNTOWN WILLARD."

So, if the City acquired Greenway interests in everything downtown except the trailhead and the existing trailhead parking, and took ownership of the windowless block building. And if the City bought the gravel parking lot from the current owner and prepared to build the old depot back into its very specific and historic location along the trail, and contracted with the Architect who drew the plans over 21 years ago and would cause the complete reconstruction of the depot. And if all four city banks join the effort to make the return of the depot a community-wide effort, and with a bunch of community pride, all current downtown businesses joined the chorus of helping the depot return. Maybe even the Railway Foundation might perk up at the thought of a complete restoration of the depot at Willard. Could City leadership really cause it to happen?

Greenway could complete their plans for the current Century 21 building by putting a 1920's architecture on the structure and opening its bathroom to the trailhead public. They could then further landscape their remaining properties eastward to the school entrance.

Sharing office and meeting room space in the returned depot building, the events planning function of the City's Parks Department and the Willard Chamber of Commerce could each operate inside the newly replaced depot structure in the center of downtown on a brand new parking lot for over 50 vehicles. And the Chamber could get to work being a full time Chamber for the City of Willard.

And thirty years from now, the residents of Willard might remember when the City did right by its heritage and rebuilt the "old downtown."

Note From the Mayor

I don't know about you, but with all the unseasonably warm weather recently I'm definitely ready for spring to be here full time. City staff is also looking forward to the coming warmer weather and looking forward to tackling multiple projects around town. With the recent realignment of some personnel and equipment in both the public works and parks departments, the city is ready to hit the ground running. Street repairs and inspection and repair of the sewer system are two of the major areas that the Board of Alderman has challenged our staff to concentrate on this year. We would welcome your input on any problematic areas that you encounter on your daily commutes around town.

The Board of Alderman is also very excited about the recent addition of members of the high school student government being a part of our monthly meetings. The participation of these young people in discussions of city business has brought forth some unique perspectives. We look forward to a continued partnership with members of the student government and would encourage all of our citizens to try and set some time aside to attend a city council meeting and see them in action.



Willard Fire Does What?

“I didn’t know they did that.”

Now is your chance to find out what Willard Fire Protection District can do for you. It’s obvious we provide emergency care for fires, medical situations, and motor vehicle accidents but did you know we love to help in our community?

- Fire Safety public education events around our community
- Birthday Parties at our Station 1 facility (\$50 refundable deposit)
- Special Meetings can be hosted in our Training Room

- Burn permits
- Station Tours at our Administration/Station 1 facility
- Emergency Medical Services Classes (EMT and CPR)
- Fire Services Classes (Fire I & II)
- Address Signs are available at our Admin Station 1 for \$15

If you are interested in information on what we can do for you, please feel free to visit our website at www.willardfire.com

Call the Administration building at 417-685-3114 or email the Administrative Assistant, Stefanie Shell at: Stefani-shell@willardfire.com.

Mark Your Calendars

Spring Break Camp at the REC is March 13th-17th. Pre-registration by March 9th to avoid late fee!

Tumbling Toddlers Classes begin March 22nd. Session includes 6 classes that meet Wed. at 9am at the REC.

Spring Dance Class begins March 6th. We offer ballet, tap, jazz and lyrical. Classes start as young as 3 years old through high school!

Indoor Yard Sale at the REC is April 1st. Sign up now to turn your stuff into cash!

The Great Easter Egg Hunt is April 8th at the REC starting at 8am

Father Daughter Ball is Saturday May 6th!

Kid-Venture Summer Camp Starts

MEET THE STAFF

Each month, Willard Parks will bring you some information about your Willard Parks staff. This month’s featured staff member is JC Loveland.



J.C. Loveland – CPRP, CPO

Director, Willard Parks and Recreation

(B.S.) College of the Ozarks, (M.E.) William Woods University

As a college student I received my first part-time job as a summer day camp counselor with the Springfield Greene County Park Board. From that time forward I was hooked on the recreation field. After graduating from College of the Ozarks with my History/Secondary Education degree, I accepted a position of Recreation Specialist with the Springfield Greene County Parks Department. After a year I was promoted to Recreation Supervisor for the School-Park Section of the Springfield Parks Department.

Over the next 7 years, in addition to working for Springfield, I obtained my Master’s Degree in Education and Athletic Activities Admin from William Woods University. I also became a member of Missouri Parks and Recreation Association in 2007 and became involved with MPRA conferences and other MPRA activities.

In February of 2013 I accepted the position of Community Service Director/Director of Parks for the City of Willard. I served as the Director-Elect for the Southwest

PARK NEWS



- Willard Parks is happy to announce that Tae Kwon Do classes have started. If you missed registration, you can register at the Rec Center. Classes are Monday and Thursday at 6pm.
- Spring Basketball games are underway
- Kid-Venture Summer Day Camp on February 20th, Register by the 16th to avoid a late fee
- Spring Soccer Registration is ongoing; the deadline to register is March 4th
- Spring Volleyball Registration is ongoing; the deadline to register is March 4th
- Development has begun at the Miller Farm Park! We now have a parking lot, and hope to begin construction of a disc golf course soon.
- Online Registration is coming soon! You will be able to register and pay for any of the programs, classes, or camps from the comfort of your home!

Region and as the Region Director for the Southwest Region from 2012 - 2014. In 2016 I was elected by my peers as the president elect for MPRA. My term as president will start in 2017-18.

I am very excited to represent the City of Willard on a State level. I take a lot of pride in what Willard has to offer its

citizens. As a resident of Willard I love this town. My wife Kristina has taught at the Middle School for 14 years and I have twin boys that attend Willard North Elementary. I envision my children and grandchildren enjoying Willard Parks and Recreation for years to come.

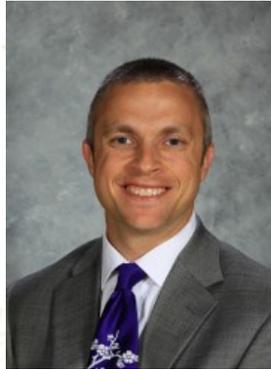


WillardPublicSchools

Focused | Connected | Driven

NEW SUPERINTENDENT OF WILLARD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

It is my honor to introduce Dr. Matt Teeter as the new Willard Superintendent of Schools. Dr. Teeter will begin his new position July 1st, 2017. He is currently the Superintendent of Smithton R-VI School District in Missouri. I have enjoyed getting to know Dr. Teeter as we begin this transition. He is already working to move his family to Willard. My administrative team and I have been discussing this important transition since I announced my retirement in August. All administrators are currently working on a book study and much of the discussion is directed toward the transition to new leadership. I am committed to helping Dr. Teeter be successful. Dr. Teeter has received a Willard e-mail account: mattteeter@willardschools.net. I encourage you to shoot him an email and personally welcome him to our district. I think he is beginning to understand that he is joining an incredible team of professionals and a community that loves their schools!



Dr. Medlin
Superintendent

Notes from Staff:

The City of Willard Planning and Development Department has recently adopted the 2012 International Building Codes as well as the 2011 National Electric Code. All new buildings will need to ensure that they are following the guidelines set out in these new Codes.

New Willard Police Officers

The Willard Police Department would like to introduce three new members to our team, **Officer Joseph Duran**, **Officer Benjamin Peebles** and **Officer Dakota Radford**.

Officer Duran joined the Willard Police Department in October 2016. He successfully completed Field Training and began his own shift on December 1, 2016. Officer Duran was born in Belflower, California. He said the area was growing heavy with gang and criminal activity and he wanted a change of scenery. In 1990, Officer Duran followed his father to Springfield, Missouri. Officer Duran met and married his wife Megan in 2007. Together, they have four kids. Officer Duran attended Drury University Missouri POST 740 hour Police Academy and graduated in 2016. He excelled in firearms. Officer Duran enjoys hunting. Last year he went mountain lion hunting in Arizona. Officer Duran said he most enjoys time with his family doing outdoor activities. Officer Duran worked in the construction field and finally owned his own concrete business prior to becoming a police officer. We are very pleased to welcome Officer Duran.

Officer Peebles was born and raised in Missouri. He is one of nine siblings all of which his mother homeschooled. After graduation, Officer Peebles worked in the family business until his father took a position as a church pastor. It was in the same church that Officer Peebles met the woman that in 2013 became his wife. As a result, they have three beautiful children. Officer Peebles enjoys music. He plays guitar and some piano. He is also a talented singer, but reluctant to say so. Officer Peebles attended the Drury University Missouri POST 740 hour Police Academy. He graduated number one overall in his class. Officer Peebles is in the final few days of Field Training and will soon assume his own shift. We are very proud to welcome Officer Peebles.

Officer Radford was born in Springfield, Missouri. His only sibling is a younger sister. Officer Radford graduated from Republic High School in 2014. He described himself as an outdoorsman. Officer Radford is an avid hunter, enjoys fishing and likes to camp when possible. Officer Radford has a fiancé who is studying to be a registered nurse. Upon her graduation, they plan to get married. Officer Radford attended the Drury University Missouri POST 740 hour Police Academy and graduated third in his class. The Willard Police Department is excited to welcome Officer Radford.



WILLARD PAL

On April 11, 2017, 175 students will graduate the DARE program. Chief Tom McClain heads up the DARE program and this is the second class of the year to graduate. DARE has been an integral part of the Willard Intermediate curriculum for the last several years. In September 2017, Officer Scott Rowe will attend DARE Instructor School and join Chief McClain in this amazing, time tested program.

Coached by Glenn Cozzens, the Pal program is going well. The program is open to youth ages 8 to 18 years old. Each student learns the fundamentals of boxing and progresses into supervised sparring matches. In addition, the program focuses on the development of personal attributes, teamwork and sportsmanship. Enrollment open for all skill levels. For more information, please contact Chief McClain at 742-5341.

New City Employees:

Interim City Administrator: Jim Bentley
Finance: Edna Anderson & Christina Wood
Parks: Kyle Laughlin, Brett Opfer & Kelly Blakemore
Public Works: Joe Crouch, John Hicks, Ben Baker & Heath Hodges

New Businesses:

Tiger Tanning
 Your Choice Travel
 Out of the Attic Vintage Flea Market
 Naomi's Café (coming soon)