

## Co-Responders Assist Police during Mental Health Crisis Calls

“The right intervention at the right time by the right person.”

**T**he Johnson County Co-Responder program deploys a mental health professional on law enforcement calls for service involving people with behavioral health needs. The main goal of Johnson County Mental Health Center’s Co-Responder program is to “provide the right intervention at the right time by the right person”.

The co-responders, all licensed clinicians, provide immediate assistance to the police department during and following emergency calls, such as connecting individuals with appropriate resources and reducing unnecessary arrests or emergency room visits. Thanks to the intervention of the co-responder in Roeland Park, seven residents avoided emergency medical services, three avoided the ER and four

avoided jail in 2020 through October. The Northeast co-responder, Jen Melby, provides service to Roeland Park, Fairway, Merriam, Mission, Mission Woods, Westwood and Westwood Hills.

The Co-Responder Program highlights three key benefits: caring for the community, saving time and money, and relationship growth. Co-Responders are able to check in with people post-crisis to ensure they are receiving proper care and help reduce the stigma of needing mental health care. This innovative program effectively provides follow up and engagement with people to get them into local services and prevent them from being incarcerated, ending up in emergency rooms, or potentially involved in continued police interactions.



Jen Melby is the Co-Responder for Roeland Park. Her work cell is (913) 326-3000. Her hours are: Mon – Tues 2 pm – 10 pm, Wed 12 pm – 8pm, Thurs - Fri 9 am – 5 pm. The 24/7 crisis hotline is (913) 268-0156.



## Roeland Park Shares Residents’ Acts of Kindness

**W**hen Michael Foltz learned his older neighbor got a new energetic rescue dog, he did not hesitate to offer to help. A dog lover himself, Foltz knew that getting young dogs out for walks was essential to helping them behave and live their best life. Knowing that his neighbor was

not physically able to give the dog daily walks, Foltz volunteered to do just that.



Michael Foltz walks his neighbor's energetic dog.

If you have witnessed an act of kindness in Roeland Park we want to hear about it! Share what you have witnessed and we may post it on our social media and in our City newsletter. Those who submit the act and those who perform it will get some great RP schwag!

Help us share some good news and complete the form found at <https://www.roelandpark.org/381/RP-Acts-of-Kindness>. We may contact you for more details and pictures. Thank you for your efforts and being so great! #RPPride.

This story came to us from neighbor Pam Wilson and inspired the *Acts of Kindness* series in our e-newsletter and on the City website. To get regular e-news updates visit [roelandpark.org/79/social-networking](https://www.roelandpark.org/79/social-networking) to sign up.

# A Letter from Mayor Mike Kelly

Dear Friends,

As I have done for each of the past three years, I wanted to end the year with reflections of gratitude for the opportunity to serve as your Mayor. It is a humbling experience, and I am very thankful for the trust you have put in me as we continue to build the best city in Kansas together.

This year, 2020, will not be soon forgotten by any of us. The emotional, physical, and financial toll put upon us was beyond our control and caused us all to have a much different year than expected. As your Mayor, I did not take lightly the responsibility of drafting and executing Emergency Orders. Holding virtual Council Meetings, closing the pool, and restricting community gatherings weighed heavily on this Governing Body. However, these steps were necessary in order to do our part and limit the spread of COVID-19. I am proud of my fellow Governing Body members for their collective courage. Further, I am so thankful for our staff. They are unparalleled in their abilities, their kindness, and their dedication to our community. We have made it a priority to invest in people, and it is fortunate to see such a return on that investment. It is my absolute pleasure to work with each of them.

Our community is strong and continues to show how much our residents care about each other. Local government can best be described, to me, as the culmination of what we choose to do together. This year, we have accomplished many things. In a year of construction on many fronts, some highlights include:

- We revamped our major thoroughfare with the City's largest infrastructure project ever in Roe 2020.
- We beautified R Park through the installation of a Pavilion, permanent restrooms, and several more improvements.
- We modernized our Aquatic Center to match our changing community needs.

These and other improvements could not have been possible without the dedication and efforts of many people. To

all, I say, thank you. Additionally, I wanted to thank you for your trust and dedication to continued growth throughout the city by voting in favor of our special infrastructure sales tax, allowing us to continue to improve our infrastructure for the current - and future - generations of Roeland Parkers.

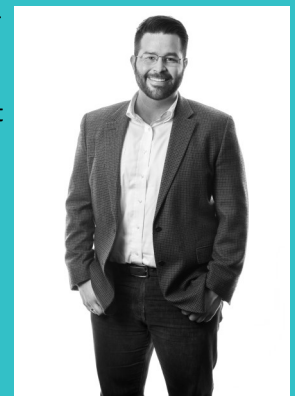
Physical assets were not the only way in which we expressed care for each other. This year saw exceptional generosity of spirit and charity. As but a few examples:

- Increased investment in the Property Tax Assistance Program and Neighbors Helping Neighbors Program.
- Countless hours and generous donations at the Roeland Park Community Pantry (in partnership with the Roeland Park United Methodist Church)
- Holiday adoptions, providing Thanksgiving and Christmas joy to local families.
- Considerate, substantive reaction to issues facing our community and our world: Removing racially restrictive deed covenants, banning conversion therapy for minors, adopting a racial equity and inclusion resolution, and creating two new ad hoc committees focused on Police Policy Review and Racial Equity and Inclusion.

These accomplishments, and the daily interactions I have shared with Roeland Park neighbors, fills me with hope for better days ahead. So, as we end another chapter in the history of our City, let us all take strength in this hope, and in each other. Whether you celebrate Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanza, or none of the above, may you be blessed with the spirit of the season, which is peace; the gladness of the season, which is hope; and the heart of the season, which is love.

Sincerely,

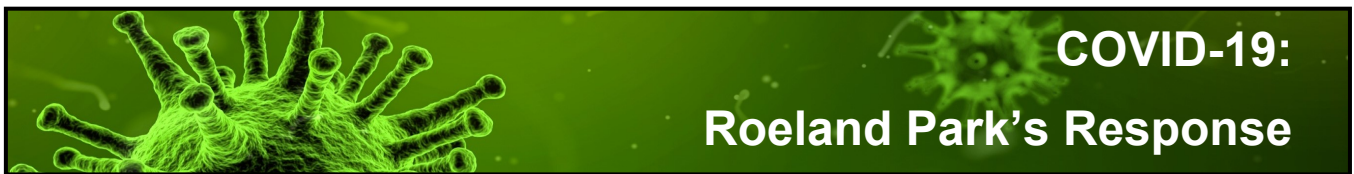
Mayor Mike Kelly



## Property Tax Rebate Program

The Governing Body adopted the Property Tax Rebate program designed to alleviate some of the burden of home ownership in the face of rising property values and a trying year. The program will rebate 100% of the City's portion of property taxes to those who meet the Department of Housing and Urban Development's income guidelines for Johnson County. This past year, 16 people received full rebates for the City's portion of property tax.

Applications can be found at [www.roelandpark.net/361/Property-Tax-Rebate-Program](http://www.roelandpark.net/361/Property-Tax-Rebate-Program). Applications will be accepted starting on January 4, 2021.



**T**he novel coronavirus pandemic has completely upended how we live our lives, disrupting our daily routines, our jobs and our families. While city officials and staff work to continue essential services for our residents, the health and safety of our community as well as our staff is our priority.

A public health order to help slow the spread of COVID-19 in Johnson County went into effect at 12:01 a.m., on Monday November 16. Additionally, the mask order will remain in effect.

Per the public health order, there are now limits of gatherings to 50 people or 50% of the capacity defined by the building's fire codes, whichever is less. Restaurants and bars must close by midnight. Recreation and youth sports and practices may continue, however, spectator attendance is limited to two per participant.

Masks will be required while outside if distancing is not possible. Signs have been placed in parks throughout the City reminding people that masks are now required when outdoors if proper distancing is not possible. The public health directives are enforceable. For the full order, visit [jocogov.org/healthorder](https://www.jocogov.org/healthorder).

It is more important than ever for our community to take steps to prevent further spread of COVID-19. We can do this by:

- ◆ Wearing masks appropriately and consistently in public places;
- ◆ Physical distancing;
- ◆ Washing hands frequently;
- ◆ Staying home when sick.

There are a variety of resources you can use to stay up-to-date on COVID-19-related news and announcements:

#### **Roeland Park COVID-19 Updates Page**

<https://www.roelandpark.org/373/COVID-19-Updates>

#### **Johnson County News Page**

<https://www.jocogov.org/news-article>

Just because we may be over the pandemic, does not mean the pandemic is over. We must remain careful and diligent to protect ourselves, our loved ones, and anyone with whom we may come into contact.

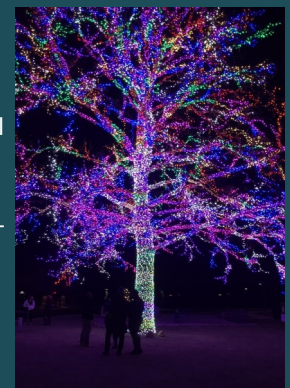
## **6 Tips for a Sustainable Holiday Season**

**T**he holidays this year may be more unique than traditional. Whether you plan to celebrate the season solo or gather safely with friends and family, there are ways to make the holidays both festive and sustainable.

- 1) Use a living Christmas tree. Plastic holiday trees will eventually end up in a landfill, but living Christmas trees are 100% biodegradable and easily recycled. A balled-and-bur lapped tree can be planted in your yard after the holiday.
- 2) Consider sustainable gifts such as donations, experiences, or gifts made from recycled materials.
- 3) Reduce food waste. Make a grocery list and purchase only as much as you really need. Use up those leftovers to ensure that nothing goes in the garbage. Leftover roast turkey and mashed potatoes can become a delicious casserole. Leftover corn and green beans can be added to a savory soup.

- 4) Minimize plastic and packaging. When buying and wrapping gifts, be creative! Wrap that trendy kitchen gadget in a pretty tea towel. Tuck a new sweater into a handcrafted basket. Hide a cute Teddy bear in a handy backpack.
- 5) Avoid disposable dinnerware. Plastic plates, cups, and cutlery can't always be easily recycled, even though they're made from recyclable plastic. Avoid bottled water and plastic drinking straws, and recycle whatever you can afterward.
- 6) Shop locally. Support the local economy and employment, and minimize the energy expenditure and emissions associated with transport.

However you plan to celebrate, enjoy a safe—and sustainable—holiday season!



# The Roeland Park Recreation Campus



## Roeland Park Community Center

(913) 826-3160

### Office Hours

*Hours may vary, call for details*

Monday-Friday: 8 am-6 pm

Saturday: 8 am-1 pm

### Fitness Room

*Hours may vary, call for details*

Monday-Friday: 7 am-6 pm

*(closed for cleaning 2pm-3 pm M-F)*

Saturday: 8 am-1 pm

Sunday: Closed

## Roeland Park Sports Dome

(913) 362-8700

Please call for open gym and court rental availability.



[www.jcprd.com](http://www.jcprd.com)

## Fun for All

**Family Fun: Time Capsule Kits, register by December 21st, pick-up December 28th—30th, \$10**

This has certainly been a year to remember! Gather the family and make the most out of your time home together creating a time capsule filled with letters, photos, and favorites. We'll provide the memory box and starter materials.

## Adult

**Yoga: Hatha (Gentle) Yoga, Ongoing - Mondays and Thursdays, 4:30 pm-5:30 pm, First class is Free**  
MODERATE INTENSITY: Strengthen your body, calm your mind and improve flexibility and balance. To try one class for free, call (913) 826-3160 for details and class schedule. Monthly pricing available following first class.

## 50 Plus

**Holiday Event: Noon Year's Eve Virtual Program, Thursday, December 31st, 11 am-Noon, \$5-\$15**  
Join us from the comfort of your home this New Year's Eve for the 50 Plus Department's annual NOON Year's Eve celebration. We'll incorporate games, performances, door prizes, and good ol' fashion fun while we ring in the new year! Option to add on a boxed lunch and party pack pick-up for \$15. Pick up is between 9am - 10am on 12/31 at the Roeland Park Community Center.

**Exercise: Tai Chi, Tuesdays, January 12-February 2nd, 5 pm-5:50 pm, \$36**

Tai Chi offers a slow and gentle exercise with benefits in endurance, flexibility, and muscle strengthening. All experience levels welcome in this course.

**Technology: How to Use Zoom, Saturday, January 9th, 9 am-10 am, \$10**

Zoom is the new buzzword! Learn how to sign up and use the software platform Zoom. Bring your device and any associated account passwords.

**Technology: Password Protection, Saturday, January 9th, 11 am-1 pm, \$20**

"Password: Kv39X@^z!f9# does not meet password setting criteria." Does remembering and resetting all those online passwords drive you bananas? Hear from a technology wiz on how to keep your personal information safe.

## A GREAT PLACE TO WORK OUT & SHAPE UP



## Roeland Park Community Center

4850 Rosewood Dr., Roeland Park, KS 66205 • (913) 826-3160

**HOURS: Monday - Friday: 7 am to 6 pm**

**Saturday: 8 am to 1 pm Sunday: Closed**

### WE HAVE A LOT TO OFFER!

- Single and Family Memberships
- 60+ Single and 60+ Family Memberships
- Wellness, Enrichment and Fitness Classes
- Strength and Cardio Equipment
- Yoga and T'ai Chi Classes
- Personal training
- Prime Fitness



**SilverSneakers**

**Renew Active**  
by UnitedHealthcare



**For a complete list of offerings visit [JCPRD.com](http://JCPRD.com).**



## A Message from the Roeland Park Police Department

**W**hen the weather gets colder, drivers may want to leave their vehicle running to warm up the engine, but did you know that leaving a vehicle alone with the engine running could be illegal? Officers can issue a ticket that is accompanied by a \$100 fine plus court fees. The Roeland Park Police Department would like to remind drivers to never leave their vehicle unattended with the engine running and keys in the ignition. While it is not illegal if you have a remote-starter, unattended, running vehicles can pose a safety hazard. If the vehicle slips out of gear and causes an accident, you could be responsible for damages. That is why the RPPD advises drivers to avoid leaving any vehicle unattended while running.

Vehicles left running outside homes, in front of convenience stores and at gas pumps present an easy target for car thieves. Remember to always take your keys with you and secure your vehicle, even for a short trip into the store. If you do leave your vehicle running unattended, make sure your doors are locked at all times, spare keys are

not left behind and valuables are not visible or in the vehicle. Stay safe out there!

Sergeant John W. De Moss II  
Roeland Park Police Department



## Johnson County Housing Assistance Fund Created to Prevent Evictions During the COVID-19 Pandemic

**T**he fund provides help in paying past-due rent, mortgage and utility bills for residents of Johnson County who, without the assistance, would be at risk of losing their housing. United Way is pleased to partner with five human service providers serving Johnson County to coordinate this fund. Households may receive up to \$5,000 in assistance to help with these needs. Funds are paid directly to landlords, mortgage companies and utility providers. Assistance is available to households experiencing financial hardship and whose annual income does not exceed \$73,417.

An online application form has been established for households seeking assistance: <https://www.unitedwaygkc.org/stories/johnson-county-cares-act-housing-assistance-fund>.

## A HUGE THANK YOU

"Eucalyptus" by artist Vadim Kharchenko is a sculpture chosen by the art committee located in Nall Park. Public works and the Parks Committee worked diligently to make sure it was installed and landscaped to perfection. Please check it out. As Picasso said, "Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life." Give yourself a break and go to the park. The Arts Advisory Committee would like to send a huge thank you to Public Works and the Parks Committee. We

appreciate your time and dedication to our city. You are all making such a difference in our amazing city.



## Arts Advisory Committee Community Giving

The Roeland Park Arts Advisory Committee donated art supplies to Roesland Elementary as part of our mission to motivate and encourage young artists in our community. You never know where the next Thomas Hart Benton might come from! The Arts Committee members are happy to help our local elementary school continue its arts programming, encouraging creativity and the development of young minds.



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Administrator  
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Kelley Nielsen  
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Police Department  
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Public Works Department  
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Mayor—Mike Kelly  
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### Resident Laura Baker Released New Cookbook

Laura Baker released *Pie as Art, Volume 1* on July 10, 2020 at a pie-themed event in Lindsborg, KS. Baker has assembled 32 recipes that are accompanied by unique illustrations. You can purchase the book and follow Laura Baker's blog at [www.piebakerlady.com](http://www.piebakerlady.com). Laura Baker will be featured in the George R. Schlegel Gallery in Roeland Park's City Hall for the month of February



### Sales Tax Ballot Question Approved

**T**hank you to everyone who voted during the November 3, 2020, General Election. The Roeland Park Sales Tax Ballot Question was approved by a majority of voters. The final result reflected 60% voter approval of the ballot question. The total votes cast in the ballot question was 4,152 of which 2,485 were votes in support. There are 5,713 registered voters in Roeland Park, and turnout was 75%. The Governing Body passed an ordinance on November 16, 2020 certifying the result as final.

Funds raised by this sales tax will go toward special infrastructure projects including roads, stormwater, and parks projects. The new sales tax will go into effect April 1, 2021, and will sunset on March 31, 2031.

