

February/March 2024

# THE ROELAND PARKER

Official Newsletter of the City of Roeland Park

## MAYOR AND COUNCILMEMBERS SWORN IN

At the Council meeting on December 4, 2023, City Clerk Kelley Nielsen swore in incumbents Jan Faidley, Ward 1, Ben Dickens, Ward 2 and Mayor Michael Poppa. We also welcomed new members Emily Hage, Ward 3 and Matt Lero, Ward 4. Check out page 2 to learn more about our newest members of the Council.

We also said goodbye to Councilmembers Trisha Brauer, Ward 3, Miel Castagna-Herrera, Ward 4 and Michael Rebne, Ward 4. We extend a **huge thank you** to them for their years of dedicated service!



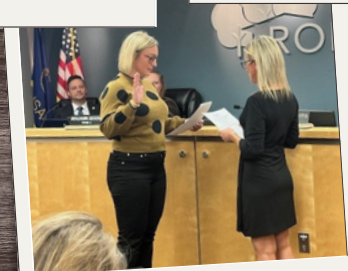
Jan Faidley



Michael Poppa



Ben Dickens



Emily Hage



Matt Lero

## This issue:

Page 2:

Q&A with the new Council Members

Page 3:

RPCC News

Page 4:

Meet our new staff - Code Enforcement Officer and Police Officers

Page 5:

Sustainability Projects in Roeland Park

Page 6:

Holiday Kindness & Family Adoption Recap  
Food Pantry Need

Page 7:

Budget Update & 2023 Crime Incidents  
City Contacts

Page 8:

Citizen's Academy  
Hiring Lifeguards

# Q&A with Your New Council Members



*Emily Hage*  
Ward 3 Councilmember

**Q: What do you do for a living?**

A: I'm the President & CEO of a local nonprofit called First Call Alcohol/Drug Prevention & Recovery. First Call has been serving the KC metro for 65 years, and we provide substance use prevention, education and recovery support services. I've worked there for 13 years, almost three of which have been as the leader of the organization.

**Q: How long have you lived in Roeland Park?**

A: My husband Erik and I purchased our first home ever in Roeland Park and it's where we still live today. We bought our home in 2012 and quickly became lifers!

**Q: Why did you run for Council?**

A: I am deeply aware of the fact that community is built intentionally, and ours in Roeland Park is particularly special. I want to be able to give back and also participate in ensuring that RP remains a welcoming, affordable, safe and inclusive community.

**Q: Tell us about your family.**

A: I am married to my college sweetheart, Erik, and we have two daughters who attend Roesland Elementary; Ellen and Violet. Our family loves playing games, enjoying local spots on Johnson Drive and learning new things - our youngest is currently learning lots of new cooking skills and Violet joined a swim team this year.

**Q: What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

A: I love cooking, gardening, and going to barre classes. I am also trying to start running this year, so wish me luck and wave if you see me out! But most of all, in such a busy season of life, my favorite thing is being with my family.

**Q: What do you do for a living?**

A: I'm the principal and co-owner of a small architecture firm, RDM Architecture, and have been since we took over in early 2020. We do primarily single family residential with a mix of new construction and remodel projects.

**Q: How long have you lived in Roeland Park?**

A: That is an easy one to remember! My wife and I moved to Roeland Park when our son was 2 and just before our daughter was born so we've been here 10 years.

**Q: Why did you run for Council?**

A: I think it is important to be involved otherwise you're just along for the ride. It is how I ended up going door to door to get support for the sidewalk along Buena Vista and later joined the Planning Commission and then the Parks and Trees Committee. When a council seat became available I thought I would have something to offer and applied for it. I didn't get it. I was more disappointed than I'd anticipated so, with some encouragement from Mayor Poppa, I decided to run for the other seat.

**Q: Tell us about your family.**

A: My wife Sara and I have two kids, Wren and Isaac, who are in 5th and 6th grades at Roesland Elementary. We've got three cats, Rachel, Carrot and Turnip (who turned up last year and never left) and a whole lot of guppies.

**Q: What do you enjoy doing in your free time?**

A: So many things. The one that takes up the most of my time (and garage space) is sailing! I'm the Commodore of the Johnson County Sailing Society and can be found at Shawnee Mission Park Lake racing, teaching or just taking folks for a spin just about every weekend during the season.



*Matt Lero*  
Ward 4 Councilmember





# ROELAND PARK COMMUNITY CENTER

## Upcoming Program Highlights

### Early Learning: Winter Wildlife (Ages 2-5 with Adult)

Feb. 22, 10:30am, 1 - 30 min class  
\$10 per child / \$11 nonresidents

Discover how animals prepare for winter. Puppets help with understanding the mysteries of hibernation and migration. See a live mammal and toad and learn how animals survive the cold weather. Presented by Ernie Miller Nature Center.

### 50 Plus Technology: Small Group Smart Phone Workshop - Android

Feb. 20 10:00am, 1 - 2 hour class  
\$21 / \$25 nonresidents

Class highlights Android devices followed by time for practice & questions. Participant is required to bring personal device and all necessary pins and passwords.

### Family Fun: Candy Bar Bingo (all ages)

Feb. 23, 5:00pm, 1 - 2 hour event

\$12 /\$13 nonresidents; per person - 20% discount on 3rd family member and any family member registered after that.

Get ready for a sweet and entertaining adventure with Candy Bar Bingo! This classic game of bingo is perfect for all ages! Includes pizza and drinks. Cost of admission covers snacks and staff time to administer the bingo program. No additional charge for bingo.

**Newly renovated spaces are now available to rent!**  
**Call (913) 826-3160 for more information.**

## Learning Odyssey Spring Break Camp

Join us during Spring Break for this teacher-led camp that brings exciting adventures in learning, featuring reading, math, and science. Each day will be creative and fun, all while keeping their minds engaged! This half day session is designed specifically for your child's grade level and will inspire creative learning, strengthen academic skills, and encourage social activities. All supplies are included and each camper will create a keepsake album to take home. Please bring a snack and a labeled water bottle.

**5 - 3 hr. sessions - \$205 / \$225 nonresidents**

Grades K-1: Mar. 11 - Mar. 15, 9am-12pm

Grades 2-3 Mar. 11 - Mar. 15, 1pm-4pm

Visit us at [JCPRD.COM/ACTIVITIES](http://JCPRD.COM/ACTIVITIES) to register.

[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ROELANDPARKCOMMUNITYCENTER](http://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/ROELANDPARKCOMMUNITYCENTER)

### Program Registration and Front Desk:

(913) 826-3160

### Sports Dome: (913) 362-8700

Please call for open gym and court rental availability.

### Community Center Office and Fitness Room Hours

Monday - Thursday: 7am - 8pm

Friday: 7am - 5pm

Saturday 8am - 1pm

Sunday: CLOSED

## Roads getting icy? Is RPCC open?

Visit [JCPRD.com/weather](http://JCPRD.com/weather) or call \*913.686.6030 for our rainout information.

\*Those calling from a landline phone must dial 1 when calling this number.

## 50 Plus Program Weekly Schedule

50 Plus programs with an \* must register in advance

Monday  
**NEW! LOTERIA** 1pm  
HATHA YOGA 4pm

Tuesday  
KNITTING GROUP  
1pm

Wednesday  
TAI CHI\* 10am  
DROP IN PAINT GROUP  
12:30pm

Thursday  
MAH JONGG 12pm  
HATHA YOGA 4pm  
TAI CHI \* 5pm

Friday  
HOBBY GROUP  
1pm

## Meet Khal Miller

Code Enforcement Officer



Khal Miller started with the City of Roeland Park in mid-December and has been learning the ropes. In his role, Khal will be responsible for helping to keep properties within the City compliant with health and safety codes. He will also take on responsibility for City grant programs.

**Q: What interests you about code enforcement?**

A: I am interested in code enforcement as it provides me a way to get to know and work with the residents of my community and help them solve issues.

**Q: What do you think is the most important focus for Roeland Park when it comes to enforcing our maintenance codes?**

A: Doing what I can in helping to keep the city safe, clean and a great place to live.

**Q: How do you like working for the City so far?**

A: Working for the city has been enjoyable. The staff from City Hall, the community center, public works, and the residents have all been very friendly and welcoming.

**Q: What can you tell us about yourself?**

A: I am happily married with two children. In addition to my wife and kids, we also have two dogs in our family. I enjoy bringing people together for different social events. I am a really into music. I'm a drummer and I have a large record collection.

## WELCOME NEW ROELAND PARK STAFF

The Police Department has been busy hiring new patrol officers. Officer Gardner and Officer Kobe started in December and January respectively and come to the City with enthusiasm and expertise in the field! With these two positions, the Police Department is now fully staffed with patrol officers!

**Q: How did you get interested in law enforcement?**

A: I've been interested in law enforcement for as long as I can remember. I've always enjoyed helping where I can and giving back as much as I can.

**Q: What were you doing before you joined the RPPD?**

A: Before I joined RPPD I worked as a Deputy for Leavenworth County Sheriff's Office.

**Q: What's your favorite thing about Roeland Park or the RPPD so far?**

A: So far, my favorite thing about Roeland Park is the community.

**Q: What do you like to do you in your free time?**

A: I spend most of my free time with my family; my wife and I have two young boys. We like to go on adventures and, weather permitting, we spend a lot of time at various parks. R Park is one of our favorites!



**Devin Gardner**



**Taylor Kobe**

**Q: How did you get interested in law enforcement?**

A: I am former military and have family that have been military and law enforcement and I figured my training and experience would transfer to this career and I would be able to make a positive impact for people in need of help.

**Q: What were you doing before you joined the RPPD?**

A: I was working as a Police Officer at Kansas City Kansas Community College.

**Q: What's your favorite thing about Roeland Park or the RPPD so far?**

A: Roeland Park is a nice city to work in and a lot of attractive community-oriented qualities.

**Q: What do you like to do you in your free time?**

A: Hunting/fishing, competitive shooting, and camping.

# SUSTAINABLE ROELAND PARK

Roeland Park cares about being green! The City has taken steps to reduce our carbon footprint and help move the region toward a sustainable future for our residents. Here are some highlights of our initiatives.

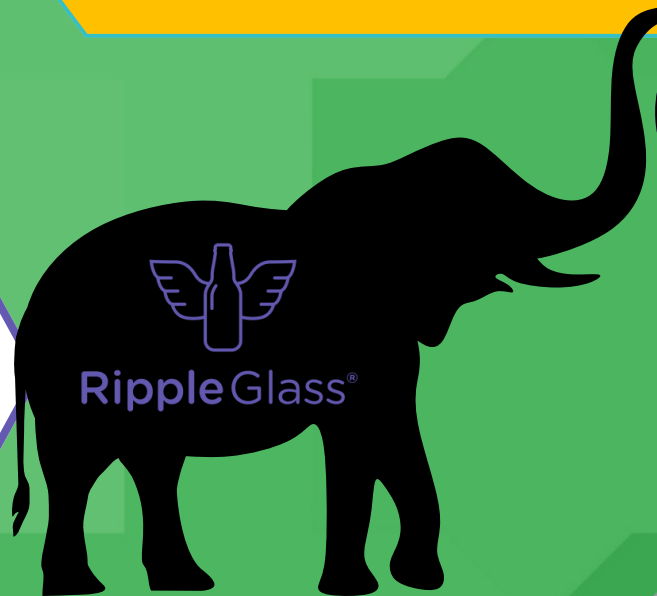


## SOLAR

The City installed solar at the Community Center, on the pool pump house, at city hall on the roof and in the parking lot in June of 2021. Since inception, this installation has **saved over 1 million pounds of carbon emissions** from the atmosphere! That's equivalent to nearly 8,000 trees planted!

## CURBSIDE *glass recycling*

Since curbside collection started in 2023, Roeland Parkers have recycled **95.17 tons of glass!** That's equivalent to nearly 32 elephants worth of glass!



Don't forget to set your glass bin out on the 1st trash day of the month!!

## HOME ENERGY AUDITS

Since inception in 2022, the Residential Energy Audit Incentive Program has granted 11 households with an energy audit. The City reimburses residents up to \$400 for an energy audit from a qualified contractor. All residents are eligible for this program!



## Hybrid & Electric Fleet

The City is driving the move toward EV and Hybrids! Neighborhood Services vehicles transitioned to EVs in 2022. The City is also working toward transitioning its Police fleet to hybrids. The City has its first hybrid police vehicle and plans for more as planned vehicle replacement occurs..



# Roeland Park Cares

The **Holiday Kindness Project** and the **Holiday Family Adoption Program** were huge successes, thanks to the generosity of our neighbors, business partners, and supporters. Organized by Neighbors for a Better Roeland Park, the Holiday Kindness Project started in 2020. Police officers hand out donated gift cards for local businesses to those in need. In 2023, 133 gift cards, at a value of \$10-\$20 each, were donated by our residents and handed out to unsuspecting shoppers in Roeland Park.

In partnership with the City of Mission, the City of Roeland Park has been participating in the Holiday Family Adoption program where local families in need are provided Christmas gifts and food for Thanksgiving and Christmas. This year, the City adopted six families and provided for nearly every gift requested.



*Thank you Roeland Park!*

## LOCAL FOOD PANTRY NEEDS YOUR HELP!

If you are able, there are four ways you can assist:

- Monetary donations can be made at: [www.oldmission.org/giving](http://www.oldmission.org/giving). Select "Roeland Park Food Pantry" from the "Fund" drop down list.
- In-kind contributions may still be left in the gray box near the west entrance of the Roeland Park United Methodist Church at 5110 Cedar St, Roeland Park.
- Volunteer to bag food: 1st & 3rd Wednesday of month from 9 - 10:30 AM at the Roeland Park United Methodist Church.
- Volunteer to distribute food: 1st & 3rd Friday of month from 8:30 - 10 AM at the Roeland Park United Methodist Church. (All those in need are welcome to come to receive food items. Please share with anyone you know in need!)



# Now Available!

## 2024 Adopted Budget



2024 Adopted Budget

2025-26 Projected



City of Roeland Park, Kansas



You can find the 2024 Adopted Budget on our website at [www.roelandpark.org](http://www.roelandpark.org).

## Lower Crime Rate in 2023!

The results are in! There are eight categories of crime that make up the Uniform Crime Report. This includes homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, theft, vehicle theft and arson. The number of incidents is divided by our population and in 2023 our Crime Index hit a three-year low at 32! A big, big thank you to our Roeland Park Police Department for their efforts this year!

## City Contacts

Search

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Chief of Police- John Morris  
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Director of Public Works - Donnie Scharff  
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Mayor - Michael Poppa  
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Ward 4 - VACANT

Ward 4 - Matt Lero  
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(913) 722-2600







## Join us for the next Citizen's Academy!

The City of Roeland Park is currently accepting applications for its Citizens' Academy Program which is set to be held in-person over nine weeks beginning in April 2024.

The Academy is designed to give Roeland Park citizens a behind-the-scenes look at the inner workings of the City. Class participants will have the opportunity to learn about how the City budget is developed, tour the police station, receive a look at the Public Works building, visit regional fire and water treatment facilities, and more.

The Roeland Park Citizens' Academy is a free program open to any Roeland Park resident age 16 and up. You can find more information on the Academy on the City's website, [roelandpark.org](http://roelandpark.org). If you are a Roeland Park resident interested in applying, please complete an application online. **The deadline to apply is February 23, 2024** and space is limited.

ROELAND PARK  
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WE'RE  
**HIRING**  
*Lifeguards*

FREE LIFEGUARD TRAINING,  
POOL & FITNESS MEMBERSHIP  
FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY!

**\$16/HR STARTING PAY**

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[www.roelandpark.org](http://www.roelandpark.org)