

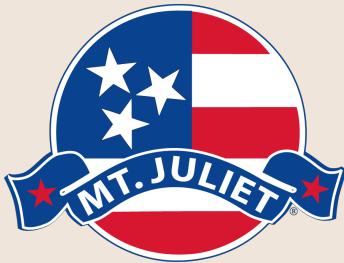
APRIL 2020 NEWSLETTER



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Mt. Juliet City Commissioner, District 4

April was a month for trial and error for all of us, to say the least. We basically have worked together while in our own homes, adapted to the COVID-19 guidelines, and learned a new way of life, that hopefully will be over soon. I for one have been cooking, feeding birds, cleaning the basement, working in the yard, which I love to do, and helping my mother with projects around her house.

Well, MJ got hit again by excessive straight-line winds (70+ mph) Sunday. It was wide-spread with a massive amount of tree damage, but thankfully it wasn't another tornado and no reports of injuries or deaths. I hope everyone is ok and your power is back on by now, although there a couple of areas that are still in the process of being restored. There was a total of 22,000 MJ residents without power for at least a few hours, if not overnight.

During and after the storm:

- 19 roadways were blocked/closed because of downed power lines/trees
- Six intersections were without power
- Eight homes reported significant damage related to trees falling or partial roofs gone
- Dispatch lost power/internet briefly which dropped the Computer Aided Dispatch system and radio consoles so they resorted to pen and paper. Thankfully the generator kicked in and power was maintained
- Police Headquarters sustained some minor wind damage related to some siding. The traffic message board was blown over and was damaged in the wind

As the city's crews begin cleaning up storm debris, (separate from tornado effort and chipper service) when putting your cut up trees/limbs at the road, please note the following:

- 10-inch diameter logs or smaller**
 - Branches/limbs less than 15 ft in length**
 - Place debris within 10 ft of public roadway**
 - The city is not able to collect any root balls or logs over 10-inches in diameter**
 - Nothing other than vegetation debris will be picked up.**
- According to Public Works, it will be up to the homeowner to dispose of other materials**

COVID-19

Businesses are beginning to open back up. They have been struggling to stay afloat and unfortunately **My Pie and Logan's will not reopen.** Restaurants/Retail/Gyms have been given the green light (with restrictions), while Gyms/Hair-Nail Salons/Barbers/Massage are scheduled to open tomorrow, May 6 (with restrictions). Places of worship will be left up to individual

locations to use their own discretion with guidelines. Contact your place of worship for their timeline.

The COVID-19 numbers continually improve thankfully. As Gov. Lee continues with his reopening phase, MJ and Wilson Co. will follow his lead. Throughout the process we must still adhere to the CDC/NIH safety guidelines to ensure the number of cases continue downward.

Our MJ city employee that tested positive for the coronavirus has thankfully recovered and is back at work. Two FDMJ employees were affected, recovered and are both back on the job as well. I'm glad to see them back.

The Community Center at Charlie Daniels Park (CDCC) remains closed until further notice, which includes basketball and volleyball. Tennis courts, Pickleball courts and the Skatepark are open. Playgrounds are set to open May 11, as of right now, and looks promising.

Please continue to take care, stay safe, and keep our healthcare professionals, the elderly, those with compromised immune systems and underlying conditions, and those affected in your prayers.

Food Trucks

There have been a great number of requests from residents all over the city for the food trucks to return. Because of the tornado and then COVID-19 "Safer-at-Home" State of Emergencies (SoE), the Zoning Administrator had the authority to issue temporary permits for food truck vendors to enter the city and various neighborhoods. They have been a great help to the city and residents during this time and as a result, there has been an increase in public demand. The permits ended last week, as they were set to expire April 30, with no new permits being issued. Despite a rumor on social media that (admittedly) was started by a food truck vendor, it set off a firestorm of misinformation, saying that the city banned food trucks. This was not the case. I tried to clear up what I could and explain what actually took place and set the record straight. Food truck vendors are only allowed in the city on a temporary basis up to six times a year. The SoEs were a temporary exception to the zoning ordinance, which went back into effect May 1. Nothing about the ordinance changed.

In saying that, I have talked with several residents in my district as well as other districts about their desire for the food trucks to be able to continue coming to their neighborhoods. I have also had conversations with a couple of food truck vendors as well. Options are currently being explored, but please know, if the zoning ordinance were to ever be changed (which would be a change in the law), there is a process that starts with City Planning and it would have to go through the Planning Commission and then the BOC. So if it were to happen at some point in the future, it is not an overnight process. In the meantime, our local brick and mortar businesses need our

support as they begin to reopen, so please consider them, as they have been struggling for the past two months.

As a side note, the city receives no sales tax revenue from food truck vendors, only permit fees.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

1) City-wide tornado debris removal: I went on a city tour with Public Works (PW) Director, Andy Barlow and City Mechanic, Toby Tombs on Tuesday, April 28 to see the ongoing progress from the tornado debris cleanup. It is a slow process because of the massive destruction, but it is very well organized and in full swing. We toured all the impacted areas as well as the dump site(s) for vegetation and everything else. The first pass has now been completed with 60,000 cubic yards of debris removed and phase 2 for the second pass began today, May 5. There will be a total of 3 passes (phases) that will complete the pickup process. The 3rd and final pass will begin Monday, May 11.

PLEASE NOTE (and share): There have been some piles of debris on the pickup routes that are not within reach of the trucks picking up the material. The city needs as many people as possible to assist in the cleanup effort to move whatever debris is remaining, to within 10 feet of the roadway, in order for the truck contractors to be able to remove all the remaining debris, no later than Sunday, May 10. Any tornado-related debris brought to the road after Sunday, risks not be collected.

2) I am finally going on a [ride-along with MJPd](#) this Thursday, May 7 during the second shift. This should be interesting and I am looking forward to experiencing first-hand what it's like to see what our officers go through on any given day/night.

3) City staff and the Board of Commissioners (BOC) had our [2020/2021 Budget Workshop](#) on Monday, April 27. It went very well and I am pleased to say we presented a balanced budget and are not raising taxes. MJ continues to be fiscally responsible and I am proud to serve and be a part of it. We still won't know exact sales tax numbers from the effects of the tornado and business closings due to COVID-19 until probably May/June.

I would like to commend our City Manager, Kenny Martin and all the city staff for their willingness to forgo their cost of living and merit raises in the new budget year because of the effects the tornado and COVID-19 has had on our economy. They all work very hard for us, therefore, depending on the economy, I would like to revisit this later in the year.

4) MJ city offices reopened Monday, May 4 to the public.

5) Please remember to [complete your federal census](#) if you haven't sent it off yet. The last U.S. federal census was done in 2010 and they are taken every 10 years. You can fill it out online, over the phone, or by mail. Your information is confidential for 72 years.

The city of MJ gets funding based on the results that help determine how billions of dollars flow into states and

communities. The federal funds can help our hospitals, fire department, schools, parks, roads, and highways.

The results also determine the number of seats each state will have in the U.S. House of Representatives and used to draw congressional and state legislative districts. It's also mandated in the U.S. Constitution. So, make sure to get them completed as soon as possible.

6) The **Chipper service** resumed back in our area this Monday, May 4, which is Zone 1 (city District 4 for the most part).

If you would like to sign up for text/email alerts you can sign up here: <https://www.mtjuliet-tn.gov/list.aspx?listid=236>.

7) Status of **ACLU's lawsuit against MJ**: A federal judge has granted Carafem's (which provides "medical" abortions located on Crossings Circle) motion for a preliminary injunction against the city of MJ's zoning ordinance on "surgical" abortions. Carafem's claim is that the MJ amended Ordinance 2020-08 is unconstitutional, denying them the right to expand in order to provide "surgical" abortions in the city, even though they are allowed within industrial zoning. There will be more court cases to follow. Please know I cannot comment on pending litigation, but I wanted to keep you updated on the court case as it moves along.

8) **MJPD Guardian Shield/Automated License Plate Recognition readers**: (ALPR). April has been a very successful month for these readers and they are definitely doing their job.

April: Eight stolen vehicles/plates alerted that lead to 15 arrests/apprehensions, which included a juvenile runaway, a wanted aggravated robbery suspect and a wanted murder suspect. All but one, which was Wilson Co., were either out of county or out of state.

9) The **four properties** around town the city is looking at purchasing for parks and recreation, is included in the 2020/2021 budget year.

The four pieces of property being considered are; Cedar Creek Sports Center at 10770 Lebanon Rd. (13 acres); Windtree Golf Course (previously) at 810 Nonaville Rd. (60-75 acres); Eddie Thomlinson property off Beckwith (approx. 57 acres); and the Baltz property off Golden Bear.

Please note, funding for parks and recreation is earmarked specifically from the hotel/motel tax.

10) **Dog Park on SE Springdale**: I encourage everyone that goes to the dog park to park in the gravel parking lot that is provided, so we can keep vehicles off the grass and off the street. I know we like to get close to the gate for convenience, but I ask that everyone please use the parking lot. I have spoken with the parks director and he is looking at options to help the situation.

11) Memorial Day Weekend: "Honoring America's Flag" will only be a community display in The Jones Family Park (across from Wilson Bank/NMJRD), in order to avoid a community gathering because of COVID-19. If you would like to sponsor a flag in honor of a fallen veteran, you may contact Nancy Britt at ngbritt@comcast.net or 615-289-7623; Will Sellers at 615-319-2179.

12) FEMA Flood Zones: This is just an FYI, but FEMA is in the process of redrawing their floodplain map which they do about every 10 years. It's in the preliminary stage at this point and a community meeting will be scheduled within the next two months at CDCC, pending the COVID-19. For District 4, there will be homes removed, but some added and some will remain. This is a planning process so final revisions aren't expected until 2021/2022. If you currently live in a flood zone or near one, you should get a notice in the mail when the meeting has been scheduled. I will also post on Nextdoor, Facebook, and Instagram.

13) Raised Garden Beds Instructional Videos: Jan Littrell will be making videos on how to build raised gardening beds, and what to plant. They will soon be aired on MJTV, Comcast Channel 3 and TDS channel 6, so watch for the schedule. In the meantime, you can watch them live every Friday at 2 pm on City of Mt. Juliet's Facebook page.

14) TN Music City Pathways: MJ is now a part of TN Music City Pathways and will hold a ribbon cutting soon, pending COVID-19 updates. Filmmaker Ken Burns tells the story of Country Music in his latest PBS documentary, taking you on an online travel-planning experience across Tennessee's 95 counties. What does it mean for MJ? The Charlie Daniels Tennessee Music Pathways Marker is along the historical Pathways experience located in Charlie Daniels Park. Charlie Daniels helped bridge country, Southern rock, and bluegrass for his unique sound.

You can find out more at www.TnMusicPathways.com.

15) West Wilson Middle and Stoner Creek Elementary Schools: The demo, from the tornado damage, should begin soon and the construction is set to start June 1.

16) Meridian Location for MJPd/FDMJ: This location that was being utilized by our police department as a drop-in site and an office for our fire chief will be closed because of budget cutbacks. Chief Luffman's office will move to City Hall and police equipment will be moved back to the police headquarters on Charlie Daniels Pkwy.

STATUS REPORT: PROJECTS/CONSTRUCTION/DEVELOPMENTS

Belinda Pkwy Sidewalks: The weather continues to delay this project that has been revised to be completed by the end of May. They are working as fast as the weather allows. I had requested that they complete finalized efforts east of the bridge (at the church), but because of equipment they are currently using, they won't be able to complete it until the bridge is

complete and they start using the other equipment again. Thank everyone for your continued patience. I know it has been burdensome.

Potholes: Crews had begun filling potholes around our district, but now because of the storm Sunday, it will be a few weeks before they can resume.

Low sidewalk on Providence Pkwy.: I have inquired about the low (sloped) sidewalk between Kroger and Regal that has had a drainage issue for a long time now and am hopeful improvements will be made to correct the water runoff problem.

NMJRD I-40 Widening/SMJRD Widening: Not much has changed on these two projects since the process involves Right-of-Ways (ROW), environmental, design, TDOT, etc. TDOT is expected to open the bidding process for the overpass this fall. Once construction begins, it should be completed within 18 months.

Old Lebanon Dirt Rd. (OLDRD) Widening: Finalizing ROWs and utilities relocation. It is too early in the process to estimate a timeframe at this point.

Providence Pkwy. Traffic Signal/S. Greenhill Rd. Roundabout: These two projects are on hold for now because of a lack of funding.

NEW BUSINESS UPDATES

- **Exxon (Belinda Pkwy)** – is looking for a food service business to go next to them
- **Schlotzky's Deli** – is back on schedule to open soon
- **Two new Dollar Generals** – will be opening soon (Lebanon Rd. and Nonaville Rd.)
- **Taco Bell** – Lebanon Rd. is under construction
- **Town Center Trail** – Should be completed by the end of May/early June
- **Gold's Gym** – If their plan gets approved through the Planning Commission and BOC, they are anxious to start construction that would be located on Pleasant Grove Rd. across from Rockie Williams car dealership.

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETINGS

The BOC meetings during May are scheduled for Monday, May 11 and Monday, May 25 at 6:30 pm at City Hall. As it stands right now, we will meet in person and spread out like we did at the budget workshop.

CAMPAIGN TO ELECT JENNIFER MILELE

I am campaigning for the November 3rd election to keep my City Commission seat for District 4. Therefore, I am asking for your support and votes as well as financial donations to help cover postage, yard signs, mailers, printing, ads etc. In addition, I will be looking for volunteers further into the year, as well as

possibly holding a couple of fundraising events. I would be honored to have you help me keep my seat as your District 4 City Commissioner so that I may continue serving you.

What I stand for:

- Citizen advocate with a heart to serve
- No property tax increase
- Conservative
- No bias or personal agenda
- Roads/signal improvements
- Limited government
- MJ resident since 1984
- I bring open-mindedness, common sense, personal commitment and accountability with a high standard of ethics

I care because you matter, therefore I would like to hear from you. If you have any suggestions, ideas, comments, complaints, or just something to share, please let me know. If you would like to make a contribution to my campaign, volunteer, and/or sign up for monthly email newsletters, you will find the options to do so on my website below. You can also email me your email address and I will add it to the newsletter/updates list. Thank you very much.

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