

City of Fircrest Town Topics

April 2023

CITY COUNCIL

Brett Wittner, *Mayor*
Joe Barrentine, *Mayor Pro Tempore*
David M. Viafore
Shannon Reynolds
Hunter T. George
Nikki Bufford
Jim Andrews



City Council Spotlight—Mayor Brett Wittner



In 2006, my family and I decided that we had outgrown our small two-bedroom home in north Tacoma.

Although we had a wonderful view of Puget Sound, we lived in a neighborhood that was not particularly great for raising a family. We began to search for a new

home, thinking that University Place was the place to

live. At this time, the real estate market was booming, and there were not many properties on the market. We decided to expand our search to Fircrest. However, at that time, I did not know very much about Fircrest. In fact, I think that I only knew three things about Fircrest. I knew that Fircrest had a popular swimming pool. I knew that Viafore's Italian Delicatessen was in Fircrest. I knew that you never, under any circumstances, drive over 25 miles per hour or you will certainly get a speeding ticket. Immediately after expanding our search to Fircrest, we found a home in Fircrest that we were lucky enough to purchase.

Since purchasing the home in 2006, my family had grown from a household of three to a household of five. My family spent countless hours walking through Fircrest, riding bicycles, and playing in the parks (especially the Tot Lot), community center, and swimming pool. Fircrest was almost the perfect place to live and to raise a family. However, I felt that there was something missing. Although I loved the parks, I thought that Fircrest could do better. The community center was outdated and not a very inviting place to go. The swimming pool was showing its age. The parks were in a state of disrepair. I made up my mind that I wanted to do something about it.

In early 2015, I did something that seemed terrifying to me at the time. I attended a meeting of the Fircrest City Council. I did not speak at the meeting. I watched and listened. Although I had graduated from UPS with a degree in Politics and Government, I had

no idea how the city worked and had no desire to get involved in politics. However, after attending that meeting, and several others, I decided that I would run for a position on the Fircrest City Council. I went home, searched for Pierce County Elections on the Internet, and found information on how to file as a candidate. I think I paid about \$14.00 to file as a candidate. I was fortunate to have been unopposed and was elected to the Fircrest City Council in November 2015. I was also fortunate to be able to be reelected in November 2019.

After getting sworn in, it took me a while to figure out how things worked on the City Council. I found that I enjoyed it, most of the time. The City Council worked together to carefully research whether it would be possible to improve the parks and replace the pool and community center. After years of work, the City of Fircrest has a beautiful new swimming pool and community center. I would like to take this opportunity once again to thank the voters of Fircrest for coming together to support this project. I also want to thank all of the community volunteers who make Fircrest such a wonderful place to live.

On November 7, 2023, three positions for the Fircrest City Council will be open for election. I would like to encourage everyone who loves Fircrest as much as I do to attend a city council meeting. Maybe attending a meeting will encourage you to sign up as a candidate for the Fircrest City Council. The candidate filing week is May 15 -19, which is quickly approaching. Possibly due to inflation, the cost to file as a candidate has increased to \$17.73. Please go to www.piercecountywa.gov/329/Information-for-Candidates to learn more about filing as a candidate to run for Fircrest City Council. In the meantime, I'll see you in the parks.

Meet the Candidates for the New City Manager & Police Chief

For those interested in meeting the candidates for the City Manager, and Police Chief positions we will hold a meeting for each **at the Roy H. Community Center**. If you have any questions please call us 253-564-8901, the following dates are tentative.

April 20th 2023— City Manager Recruits 5:30-7 PM

April 27th 2023— Police Chief Recruits 5:30-7 PM

City of Fircrest— SAVE THE DATE: 2nd Annual Resident Poker Walk



Please join us on **Friday, July 14th between 11:30- 2:30 PM** for the 2nd Annual Resident Poker Walk sponsored by Fircrest Wellness. Fircrest Wellness is a program led by city employees who plan activities throughout the year to help staff stay active and engaged in health and wellness activities together. You may have seen us out and about doing Poker Walks in the past!

The five city buildings will be the locations for the poker walk. Each location will have staff present to meet you and give building tours if desired! We would love for the opportunity to show you the spaces where we work. Please call City Hall if you have any questions (253-564-8901). We hope to see you there!

Check out our **Up To Date Information** webpage www.cityoffircrest.net/updates for the latest information, including current meeting agendas, minutes, resolutions, ordinances, and project updates.

Serving the Community Since 1925

Fircrest Parks and Recreation

Roy H. Murphy Community Center Programs

We have a variety of fun, engaging, and welcoming programs for children, adolescents, and adults at the Roy H. Murphy Community Center. We strive to present programs that will fully utilize the new Community Center and that will deepen connections to the community and each other. Please check our website to learn more about our Community Center and Aquatic Center programs and events.

Our current programs include: Adult Basketball, Barre, Barre / HIIT, Gentle Yoga, Chair Yoga, Meditation, Drop in Pickleball, Drop in Noon Basketball, Sr. Mornings, Bridge for Beginners, Drop in Ping Pong, Wednesday Workouts - Basketball Training, Tot Story Time, Tot Gym, Creative Movement Ballet, Snapology, and Youth Baseball.

Member ID Cards

The Community Center staff are creating Member ID Cards for City of Fircrest RecDesk Account Holders. Once you have your Member ID card, staff will be able to access your RecDesk information by scanning your card. We plan to issue Member / ID cards in three phases.

- Phase I: We will begin first by issuing Member ID cards in conjunction with Fircrest Resident Season Pass sales to Fircrest Residents purchasing season passes. (New for 2023: Resident Season Pass Holders will be able to use their Member ID card for new express entry to the pool during open swim sessions.)
- Phase II: Mid-Summer - Member ID cards available to all other Fircrest Residents.
- Phase III: Fall - Member ID cards available to the general public.

Please check our website for information on when you can get your Member ID Card. <https://www.cityoffircrest.net/government/parks-and-recreation/>

In addition to these changes, the Recreation Department is conducting a database audit of Fircrest Resident household RecDesk accounts. A household account may be audited if it appears to have an excess number of individual accounts on the Fircrest Resident household.

Note: Fircrest Resident Accounts are available to those whose primary residence can be verified by the following:

- Accountholders Fircrest Utility Account Number
- Recent Fircrest Utility Bill that includes accountholders name and address
- Current lease, or rental receipts that lists both the account holders name and address

Community Center Hours

8 am to 9 pm Monday through Friday

9 am to 5 pm Saturday and Sunday

Edwards Family Aquatic Center

The 2022 pool season was the first full season at the Edwards Family Aquatic Center. The facility opened on May 28th and operated 7 days a week through Labor Day, only closing one day in August for staffing shortages. A record number of passes were sold, and the pool was consistently at capacity on days when the weather was near 80 degrees. Based on the information gathered during the pool season along with feedback from community members and the City Council we will be implementing the following changes at the Edwards Family Aquatic Center for 2023.

Swimmers now have three open swim sessions to choose from instead of two, on Saturdays and Sundays.

- Mid-Day Session - 11 am - 2 pm
- Afternoon Session - 2:30 pm - 5:30 pm
- Evening Session - 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

Season Passes are now limited to Fircrest Residents Only. (Punch Cards are available for both Fircrest Residents and Non-Residents)



Visit our Parks & Recreation webpage for up-to-date information on all of our programs, events, and facility rentals. <https://www.cityoffircrest.net/government/parks-and-recreation/>

Roy H. Murphy Community Center Phone: 253-564-8177

Join us! City Council Meetings are held the 2nd & 4th Tuesday's of the month at 7:00 pm, Council Study Sessions are the 3rd Monday of the month at 6:00 pm, & Planning Commission Meetings are the 1st Tuesday of the month at 6:00 pm.

Serving the Community Since 1925

Planning and Building

Spring Reminders

Dandelion puffs pay no mind to property lines. Please weed, feed, and cut your grass. Overgrown yards can be considered a nuisance under the City's code.

Be a dear and keep the sidewalk clear. Pruning your bushes and keeping the sidewalks free from obstacles help keep pedestrians the same.

Natural feed prevents rodent greed. While bird feeders are not prohibited in the City, a plethora of feed can attract rodents and wildlife at such a level to negatively affect neighbors. We suggest you consider planting flowers and plants that naturally attract birds and butterflies.

Thank you for collecting your doggie-doo. We love our pets, but no one loves what our pets leave behind. Whether it is in the parks, along the street, or on private property. Cleaning up after our pets is part of the gig and imperative to the health of a community.



Public Works

Spring Reminder

DO NOT blow or throw yard debris into the streets. We understand that leaves are annoying and can be difficult to keep maintained and contained to your yard, especially when the tree causing the leaf problem is in your neighbor's yard. BUT blowing or raking them into the street is not permissible. Not only are leaves considered a prohibited contaminant, they tend to be the biggest culprit of clogging the storm drains and subsequent flooding. Remember it is your responsibility to cleanup and dispose of your yard debris. We are all in this together and together we can continue to keep Fircrest the jewel of Pierce County that it is.



Volunteer *Join our Team!*
YOU
help create
more
Fircrest FUN!

For volunteer information,
jschmidtke@cityoffircrest.net.



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Police



We have seen a large rise in vehicle thefts in the City of Fircrest over the past year. A large percentage of the vehicles stolen have been Hyundai and Kia vehicles. We

have found that online videos expose how to steal models without engine immobilizers, which would prevent them from starting without a key. In 2011-2021 key-start Hyundai and Kia models. This feature is standard equipment on nearly all vehicles between those years made by other manufacturers. Kia models from 2022 and newer, as well as Hyundai vehicles built after Nov. 1, 2022, now have engine immobilizers.

No matter what brand of car you own, the tips below show how to keep your car from becoming a target. The key is to deter theft by making your car seem like more trouble than it is worth.

Practice Smart Parking

Simple habits can make a big difference. Never leave your unattended vehicle unlocked or running. Try to park in busy, well-lit areas. Double-check that you have the key or fob with you. Stow valuables out of sight to discourage smash-and-grab thefts.

Add a Lock and an Alarm System

Visible steering wheel locks, such as The Club work well as deterrents. Adding an aftermarket alarm system, which often includes a visible blinking red light could work as one too.

Install Lights at Home

Lighting can be an effective theft deterrent, especially if you park in your driveway. Motion detection lights, which can startle a would-be thief and alert those at home can be very effective.

Doorbell cameras can help deter and identify suspects. Also, remember to store keys in the house. Never leave them in the car or garage.

Track Your Car

Aftermarket tracking systems won't prevent theft, but they can help find your car after the fact.

In response to the large rise in thefts of Hyundai and Kia vehicles; the Fircrest Police Department has proudly partnered with the Puget Sound Auto Theft Task Force and has been distributing FREE WHEEL LOCKS for Kia and Hyundai Owners. So, if you own a 2011-2021 key-start Hyundai or Kia stop by the Fircrest Police Department between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm to receive a free wheel lock. Owners will need to bring their registration and key to show they own the vehicle.

Let's continue to work together and by doing so we will keep Fircrest the wonderful place it has always been.

-Chief John Cheesman

Small Business Spotlight: Mimi's Teas



Located on 618 Regents Boulevard is Mimi's Teas, a welcoming loose-leaf tea shoppe where customers from near and far come to sip, socialize, and find their own perfect cup of tea.

You can often find friends chatting over a cup or local knitters happily knitting away in the shoppe, where people are free to take a seat while they sip on their tea to-go. Having seen friendships begin over mutual interests, Certified Tea Specialist Cheryl Burlingame says "Tea is relational, and conversation is easy over a cup of tea."

Being raised by English parents, tea has always been part of her life so when the idea of opening a brick and mortar shop occurred, Cheryl's dream of what it could be became unwavering. Long before securing the location she recalls having the name of the shop, because Mimi is what her beloved grandbabies call her and it sounded cute. The details fell easily into place and the shoppe opened in 2014.

Cheryl, who is a Fircrest resident, credits her wonderful customers, and loyal family with making her dream a reality. She enjoys finding unique and unusual teas that are the perfect fit for each customer—even if they don't know it when they enter the shoppe. She believes the most rewarding part of her job is this special business community she's become apart of. Her shoppe offers varieties of Black, Green, White, Oolong, Pu-Erh, and Purple tea; caffeine-free herbal blends and Rooibos, and single-source medicinal herbs. She also offers tea-steeping accessories like tea pots, travel tumblers, infusers and tea balls, as well as unique gift ideas.



Hours:	
Tuesday	11-5 PM
Wednesday	11-5 PM
Thursday	11-5 PM
Friday	11-5 PM
Saturday	10-4 PM

(mimisteas.com)