



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release:

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MAYOR'S MONTHLY MINUTES – JULY 2018

"Projects and Initiatives to keep Douglas Shining Bright"

Greetings citizens of Douglas! Each month I enjoy updating citizens on projects or initiatives that the City is developing and implementing to keep Douglas "always shining bright". This month is Parks and Recreation month, and we have some great plans in the works for our youth and special needs citizens. Douglas Utilities has rolled out the UtilityHawk program and we have customers who are taking advantage of the program. As the Mayor of Douglas, I strongly support projects and initiatives that keep Douglas "Always Shining Bright."

July is National Parks and Recreation Month and we have good reason to celebrate our Douglas Coffee County Parks and Recreation programs and participants. Construction of three projects will begin soon – construction of Phase 1 of the Sports Complex, construction of the Miracle Field at Davis Wade Park, and City pool improvements. Beginning in the fall, we will start construction on the phase 1 of the Sports Complex at JC Adams Municipal Park. In the first phase of the Sports Complex construction, a new road will be built to connect access to the facilities located in the park as well as a round-a-bout. Four baseball/softball 200' fields with batting/pitching cages, three fields for youth flag and tackle football, playground and paved walking trail will be under construction. These additions will enhance play in Douglas and Coffee County. SPLOST funds will help cover the cost of the construction and we hope to host athletic tournaments which will bring more people to Douglas and help with economic growth.

Another construction project that will be taking place will be the Miracle Field construction at Davis Wade Park. We are so fortunate that the late Commissioner Johnnie Lee Roper, Jr. was an avid supporter of this project. His dream was to "never watch another special needs child sit on the sidelines, if they wanted to play ball". Local businesses and citizens helped get this project started and now we are going to bring the dream of Commissioner Roper to fruition. I am excited because once this construction is complete, Douglas will provide recreational facilities for ALL our children including our special needs children with disabilities. In June, we had two community partners, Waste Industries and Southwire, to donate an estimated \$13,000 to this project. We have several businesses and private citizens who have donated, however, I challenge everyone in Douglas to donate to this much needed facility. I want to say a special thanks to all that have donated and challenge each and every business or citizen to donate to the Miracle Field. Community partnerships are going to make this dream, a reality. To make a donation, please contact the Stevie

Young, Willis Crockett, or Landy Gomez at the Douglas-Coffee County Parks and Recreation Office (912-384-5978).

In addition to the Miracle Field, Davis Wade Park will undergo renovations and the pool will be updated to better suit the needs of our swim team. I can't wait for this project to be complete since our swim team has always represented Douglas well at swim meets and competitions and now we will give the team a more modern swimming facility. All year, this commission has recognized several Recreation Department participants who represented Douglas & Coffee County at GRPA Tournament at the District and State level. These kids have worked hard and they know it pays off when they win at the state level. Now, our plans for the future are even brighter! From the director, to the staff, to our participants – thanks for making Douglas and Coffee County "Shine Bright" in the recreation world!

Two initiatives that are never far from my thoughts are the Mayor's Youth Council and Douglas-Coffee County Teen Court programs. The Douglas Mayor's Youth Council is taking a break over the summer, but, they will be back in August and ready to push forward with their plans to make a difference in Douglas. For those who are not familiar with the Youth Council, the youth council is an advisory council for the commission. These youth have the ability to tell us what they think and they are making a difference to our policies when it comes to decisions that will affect them. They are holding council meetings, participating in community service, and learning what it takes to become a leader for Douglas-Coffee County. The Teen Court program is a program to help youth stay on track or get back on track with their lives. Everyone makes mistakes and this program will help give second chances to juveniles who have made a bad decision and Juvenile Court has sentenced them to Teen Court. To make the Teen Court program work, we need YOUTH volunteers. We have pushed back the starting date of this worthwhile program in the hopes of obtaining more youth volunteers. I know there are motivated juveniles in Douglas and Coffee County, who want to make difference in another's life and they should do so, by becoming part of this program. These youth and these programs are extraordinary and anyone who plans to make Douglas home needs to contribute to help these programs last.

As with any new initiative, we are faced with funding issues for the Youth Council, and Teen Court. We need donations from individuals and businesses to continue to make a difference in these kids lives and hopefully give them the guidance and training to become productive leaders in our community. I want to say thank you to Waste Industries for making a \$3,000.00 contribution, in June, to the Youth Council. If you would like to make a donation to the Youth Council or Teen Court program, please send it to the Douglas City Manager Office, PO Box 470, Douglas, GA 31534 or if you have any questions, please feel free to contact our City Clerk at (912)389-3405.

I would like utility customers to embrace the UtilityHawk program that is offered by Douglas Utilities. This program will allow citizens to know about a water leak before costly damages, see how much utility usage is taking place by the hour, set limits on their account, and allow alerts to be sent to them. We want our citizens to be able to control their utility use and become more responsible for their energy use. The program is easy to use, and will ultimately help Citizens to become energy efficient.

Douglas needs a Landlord Association. I want an association that will educate our landlords as well as their tenants. Too many times, landlords and new tenants do not know the proper steps to take when beginning their business with the City of Douglas. Yes, we have bits and pieces of information throughout City Hall, but, I want to create a finger tip guide about services the City of Douglas offers. My goal will be to provide information about our

services like energy audits, ordinances, electric rates, public safety, and much more. This information will help current citizens, future citizens, and landlords.

In closing, I want citizens to know that we are also working on projects to make services convenient, easy to access, and readily available. Other renovations that will begin in the fall will include City Hall and the completion of the Municipal Services Complex. As these constructions take place, there will be some customer inconvenience, however, please be patient. Once renovations and construction is complete, City Hall will be a one-stop shop for all citizen needs and will be a completed project shining bright in downtown Douglas! I encourage citizens to embrace these projects and initiatives that will improve quality of life in Douglas and Coffee County as well as surrounding communities. Change is hard, but, it is often times a good thing, and if we want to keep Douglas "Shining Brightly", we need to make these changes and move our city forward into the future.