

# TALK *of the* TOWN

# February 2026

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## *From the* **MAYOR'S DESK**



### **Transforming Sherwood: Growth, Investment, and Quality of Life and Place.**

**There has been significant progress in Sherwood over the past three years to improve both our quality of life and quality of place.** It is easy to forget where we were just three years ago. Country Club and Maryland were in various stages of construction. Jacksonville Cato Phase 1, which is now nearing completion, had not yet obtained the necessary right-of-way to begin as of January 2023. Phase 2 is currently in the utility relocation phase. The Whitewood, Merriwood, Hemphill, and Laramie drainage projects were all started and completed. Sherwood Acres is funded for Phase 1 this year. Sidewalks have been built throughout the city, with additional projects planned for this year.

Our once-dilapidated park system has undergone a much-needed revitalization. Improvements have been made to Stonehill, Indianhead, Storer, Verona, Lake Cherrywood, the Henson Pickleball and Tennis Center, and City Hall Park, with Duran Park slated for upgrades this year. Major lighting improvements were made to Maryland, Kiehl, and Brockington. Ballpark improvements have been made annually, including upgrades to bathrooms, concession stands, walkways, and the addition of hot water. The Harmon Center has seen ongoing interior and exterior improvements.

The golf course has benefited from maintenance upgrades and has shown improvement in each of the last three years, both in rounds played and in revenue.

The City continues to build community by expanding recreational opportunities, including pickleball and volleyball, and by adding more family-friendly events. Sherwood is also gaining increased media attention and attracting interest from both commercial and residential developers.

Public safety has been a major focus over the past several years. The Police and Fire Training Facility, along with the new Public Works Facility, represents Sherwood's first major investment in city facilities since the Harmon Center. Construction of the Public Works, Police, and Fire Training Facility is nearing completion. In addition, employee pay and staffing levels have improved significantly. Our Police Department now has its highest staffing levels in decades.

**Regional housing start data shows that these investments in safety and quality of life are paying dividends.** Sherwood had a strong economic year in 2025. In addition to retail growth, including the opening of Aldi, the largest new retail store in many years, Sherwood led Central Arkansas with an 85.9 percent increase in single-family home starts.

This was highlighted in Metroplan's December 2025 issue of METRO TRENDS Economic Review and Outlook. Little Rock followed with 61.1 percent growth, and Vilonia with 42.7 percent. Bryant and Cabot grew less residentially than they did the year before. This was also front-page news in The Leader newspaper, Jan. 21 edition, with the headline "Sherwood Boomtown: 86% Spike in New Homes."

Sherwood's median new house permit value was \$254,000. This was \$1,000 less than Bryant, \$11,680 more than Cabot and \$79,000 more than Benton. The largest area of growth is the Oakdale area of Sherwood.

In 2026, Sherwood will continue its strong residential growth with a new private gated community being developed off Maryland. This development is going to be called Stone Valley and will have 103 home sites with a combination of single family attached (townhome concept) and single family detached. This will be a zero-lot line neighborhood which means less yards to maintain.

An example to think of is Hendrix Village in Conway. These developments are geared toward both retirees and busy professionals that do not have time or the desire to maintain a yard.

There is also a new development by Steve Deere that has been platted off Jacksonville Cato Road. This will be similar in appearance to the Oakdale area with estate lots along Jacksonville Cato with the subdivision neighborhood behind it. This new neighborhood will be called Forest Creek and will have approximately 390 home sites. The entrance will be across from the city land where the road project has been staged. They will initially focus on the development of the front higher end estate lots.

The once stagnant Sherwood is moving forward. We have much to be proud of in our City! Change is sometimes difficult. However, if we aren't moving forward then, we are falling backwards. Time cannot just stand still.

Kindest regards,

*Mary Jo Heye-Townell*



**Get your 2026  
SHERWOOD  
COMMUNITY CALENDAR**

This handy calendar showcases Sherwood's landmarks, events, and community spirit.

Funded by the Sherwood Advertising & Promotions Commission.

**Available Now at All City of Sherwood Facilities!**

# CITY COUNCIL RECAP

## JANUARY 29, 2026

Watch all meetings at:

<https://www.sherwoodar.gov/watchnow>

Sherwood held a Special Called City Council meeting on January 22 to grant the mayor authority to reschedule a City Council meeting in the event of inclement weather. Passed unanimously.

(PASSED Unanimously) Motion to continue with Ordinance No. 2437, as amended by Ordinance No. 2441, regarding organizational rules and procedures as currently written. Revisions were discussed related to weather provisions, voice voting, meeting recordings, public comment sign-in procedures, and addressing matters of concern under new business. These items will be discussed further at the February meeting when all council members can be present.

(PASSED Unanimously) An ordinance amending the Retirement Committee structure for the City of Sherwood, providing for oversight of the city's 457(b) deferred compensation plan, and for other purposes. (Mayor Heye-Townsell) (Read one time at the December 2025 meeting)

(Read Once) An ordinance amending Ordinances 840, 1914, and 2236 regarding the contributed benefit paid to eligible retired elected officials and for other purposes. (Council Member Brooks) This proposed change would increase the monthly benefit from \$300 to \$350. There are 13 current retirees receiving payments. The motion to advance to second reading failed (four for, one against; six votes required to advance), so the ordinance will return for second reading in February.

(PASSED Unanimously) A resolution reappointing Eric Fleming to the Sherwood Wastewater Committee. (Mayor Heye-Townsell)

(PASSED Five For / One Against) A resolution expressing the willingness of the City of Sherwood, Arkansas, to utilize federal-aid Transportation Alternatives Program and Recreational Trails Program funds. (Mayor Heye-Townsell; Council Members Brooks and Williams) The grant would fund engineering work for the Henson Park Trail and is required for the grant application.

(PASSED Unanimously) A resolution expressing the willingness of the City of Sherwood, Arkansas, to utilize federal-aid Climate Pollution Reduction Grant funds for Phase II of the Powerline Trail, from Baring Cross to Hollywood, for construction. (Mayor Heye-Townsell)

Discussion Item – Street Committee: Consideration of lowering the speed limit on Highway 107 to 45 mph from Kellogg Road to the Hatcher Road area, as recommended by ARDOT, Police, Public Works, Administration, and the Street Committee. No objections were expressed.

Discussion Item – Parks and Recreation: Discussion regarding the minimum senior age at the Harmon Center. The current age is 50, and the Parks and Recreation Director is considering increasing it to 60 or 65.



# CLEARING THINGS UP:

## *What the City's Reserves Actually Look Like*

Sound financial stewardship is essential to maintaining a strong and resilient city. In the following article, the City's Finance Director provides an overview of the current state of Sherwood's reserves, offering insight into how thoughtful planning and responsible management help ensure long-term stability and continued service to our community.

Fiscal year 2025 marked a year of exceptional financial performance for the City, reflecting prudent stewardship of public resources, disciplined budgeting and responsible financial management. Financial highlights include:

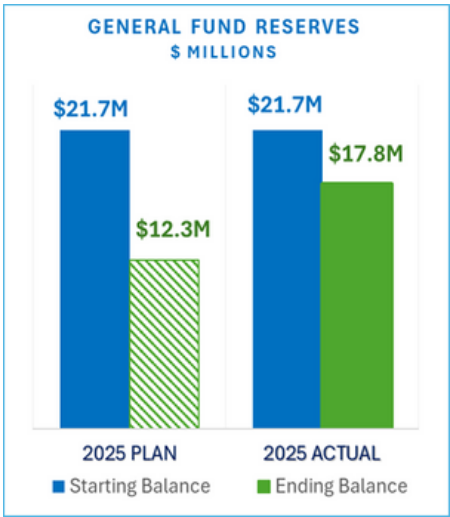
Revenues exceeded expectations by \$1.1 million, driven by stronger sales tax collections and higher interest earnings. At the same time, disciplined expense management led to a favorable outcome in expenses of \$4.4M in savings!

Results from Operations (\$ Thousands)	2025 Budget	2025 Actuals	Variance	Notes
Revenue	\$ 30,149	\$ 31,217	\$ 1,068	Key Drivers: City & County Tax \$0.4M; Interests \$0.3M; All Other \$0.4M
Reserves	\$ 9,429	\$ 3,926	\$ (5,503)	Favorable Use of Reserves (Less Than Planned)
Total Revenue	\$ 39,578	\$ 35,142	\$ (4,435)	
Total Expenses	\$ 39,578	\$ 35,142	\$ 4,435	Key Drivers: \$1.2M unspent PW project funds and \$3.2M savings in all other expenses

### Operational Results and Fund Reserves

For the 2025 fiscal year, the City Council approved the use of \$6.25 million of the City's Reserves for construction of a much-needed Public Works building. The project includes an administrative building, a maintenance and operations facility, and a training and certification shooting range for the Sherwood Police Department.

Approximately 80 percent of the project was completed during the fiscal year 2025, with \$1.2 million carried forward into fiscal year 2026 to complete the remaining work. Excluding the Public Works building project, the City achieved a net cost savings of \$3.2 million in 2025 – or 10 percent of the budget, with positive results realized across nearly all departments.



Given these operational results, the City increased the budgeted reserves in its General Fund by \$5.5 million—45 percent higher than originally planned.

The Governmental Financial Officer Association (GFOA) has advocated maintaining at least two months of expenses in the Reserve Fund to address any unplanned city emergency. For Sherwood, that guideline represents about \$5.7 million to be kept in Reserves. Given the financial performance for fiscal year 2025, Sherwood now has triple the recommended amount, ending the year with \$17.8 in Reserves.

This strong performance enhances the City's long-term financial stability and flexibility for future initiatives, while sustaining its ability to deliver reliable services, maintain critical infrastructure, and support a high quality of life for Sherwood residents.





# **HAPPY BLACK HISTORY MONTH**

**BLACK HISTORY MONTH SERVES AS A REMINDER OF THE POWER OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION IN SHAPING A STRONGER, MORE EQUITABLE SOCIETY.**

**By recognizing Black History Month, we honor the past while continuing to build a welcoming, inclusive future for Sherwood. This edition of the Talk of the Town newsletter recognizes the black history found in the leadership, service, and stories of residents whose contributions have helped shape our community.**

# Sherwood Celebrates Black History Month

## HONORING LEADERSHIP, EDUCATION, AND LIVED HISTORY

As we celebrate Black History Month, the City of Sherwood recognizes the individuals whose lives reflect both the challenges and progress of our community's history. This February, we highlight Daryl E. Bassett, a Sherwood resident and statewide leader whose personal journey through education and public service mirrors key moments in local and national history.

Growing up in Central Arkansas, Bassett attended Sylvan Hills High School during the period when schools were first desegregated. In a recent episode of the Talk of the Town podcast, he reflected on what it was like to walk into classrooms during a time of significant social change, navigating challenges, new expectations, and the weight of being part of a historic transition. His experience represents more than a personal milestone; it marks a pivotal chapter in Sherwood's educational history, when barriers were being challenged and the path toward inclusion was still being shaped in real time.

Those early experiences helped form Bassett's perspective on leadership, resilience, and opportunity. He went on to build a career grounded in public service, workforce development, and economic growth, always emphasizing the importance of expanding access and fairness for working Arkansans.



**Mr. Daryl Bassett**

Today, Daryl E. Bassett serves as the Cabinet Secretary for the Arkansas Department of Labor and Licensing, a role he has held since 2019. He has worked under multiple governors and was reappointed in 2023, reflecting bipartisan confidence in his leadership. In this role, Bassett oversees divisions focused on labor standards, occupational safety, workforce services, and professional licensing, impacting workers and businesses across the state every day.

Prior to his current appointment, Bassett served as Director of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Services and as Director of Business and Commercial Services for the Arkansas Secretary of State. He also served for nine years as a Commissioner with the Arkansas Public Service Commission, where he played a key role in utility regulation and consumer protection.

# Sherwood Celebrates Black History Month

**HONORING LEADERSHIP, EDUCATION, AND LIVED HISTORY**



Sec. Bassett served as Grand Marshall of the 2023 Sherwood Christmas Parade



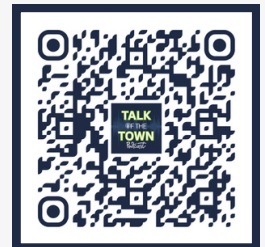
Sec. Bassett attends the annual Mayor's Prayer Breakfast

During that time, he served as President of the Southeastern Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners and as Chairman of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Diversity Committee. Earlier in his career, Bassett served as Chief Economic Development Advisor to former Governor Mike Huckabee and worked as an investment banker with Merrill Lynch. He has also served on the Financial Research Institute Board of Directors for Columbia College of Business at the University of Missouri and currently serves on several national boards of directors and civic organizations.

As we reflect during Black History Month, Bassett's story reminds us that history is not only found in textbooks or national headlines, but in the lived experiences of our neighbors. From the halls of a newly desegregated Sylvan Hills High School to the highest levels of state leadership, his journey reflects progress, perseverance, and the lasting importance of education in shaping both individuals and communities.

Mayor Mary Jo sat down with Secretary Bassett to reflect on his roots in Sherwood, how growing up in this community shaped his path, and the influences that helped pave the way for his success.

You can listen to Secretary Bassett's episode of the Talk of the Town podcast on Spotify by scanning this QR code.







## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT MARK ELLIS

PARK AND FACILITY  
MAINTENANCE

**1. How long have you been with the city?**

I am coming up on 2 years in April with the city!

**2. What positions have you held?**

I have been a Parks and Recreation worker the whole time I've been with the city.

**3. What does your job entail?**

I work across city grounds, handling repairs and day-to-day maintenance such as mowing, laying sod, and picking up trash, while also assisting as needed with special events.

**4. What hashtags describe your personality best?**

#GoGetter. I'm able to get the job done no matter the task!

**5. What are the toughest challenges you've had at work?**

The toughest challenge is laying sod in 100 degree weather.

**6. What's your secret talent no one knows about?**

My secret talent is being able to learn anything I see.

**7. When you are at work, how do you motivate yourself?**

My motivation on a daily basis is a slideshow of my family on my phone. Keeps me going knowing I have people depending on me.

**8. In terms of successes, which accomplishments are you most proud of?**

In terms of success, I am proud that I have gotten back on track in a positive manner after losing myself years ago.

**9. Tell us something on your "bucket list."**

I want to go zip lining!

**10. What is your happy place in Sherwood?**

I love the ball fields.

# BEHIND THE BADGE:

## Updates from the Sherwood Police Department



This February, we celebrate Black History Month at the Sherwood Police Department. We are grateful for the officers who paved the way for many, creating opportunities and helping build the diverse department we are proud to serve in today.

We honor their legacy, commitment, and courage, both past and present, and recognize the important role diversity plays in strengthening our agency and our relationship with the community. Their contributions continue to inspire us as we work toward a future rooted in respect, equality, and service to all.





# PROMOTING SMALL BUSINESS

## *Y'allternative Market*

Y'allternative Market is a curated vendor market located at 8120 AR 107 in Sherwood that brings together more than 70 local vendors under one roof. Shoppers can explore a wide variety of antiques, vintage finds, art, handmade goods, creative gifts, and unique new items that can't be found in big-box stores. The market is designed to be a welcoming, inclusive space where customers can discover one-of-a-kind items while directly supporting small businesses and local creatives.

The idea for Y'allternative Market grew out of a shared love for thrifting, small businesses, and the sense of community that creative spaces naturally foster. The founders recognized a need in Sherwood for a retail experience that celebrates individuality and supports makers and collectors who don't always fit into traditional retail models. Since opening in September 2025, the market has quickly become a vibrant destination for both shoppers and vendors.



What sets Y'allternative Market apart is the diversity of its vendors and the stories behind each booth. Every space is independently owned and thoughtfully styled, creating an experience that feels like browsing dozens of mini shops in one visit. Vendors are intentionally curated to offer a range of styles, price points, and products, ensuring there's something for everyone.



One of the market's most exciting recent milestones has been reaching full occupancy with more than 70 vendors, along with maintaining a strong and growing waitlist. This level of interest highlights the strong demand for creative retail spaces in the community. To keep the experience fresh, Y'allternative Market regularly introduces new vendors, seasonal displays, and special shopping events.

Community involvement is a key part of Y'allternative Market's mission. The business actively looks for opportunities to collaborate and give back locally, including a recent partnership with Kona Ice and the Sherwood Police Department to help sponsor free Kona Ice during Sherwood's Night to Unite. By supporting local artists, makers, and small businesses, Y'allternative Market continues to be a place where creativity and community connection thrive.

Looking ahead, Y'allternative Market plans to continue expanding its vendor offerings, hosting more community-driven events, and exploring opportunities for future locations. The long-term vision is to grow into a recognizable brand that supports creative entrepreneurs across Arkansas while maintaining the local, welcoming feel that makes its Sherwood location so special.





# TRAIL of LIGHTS

If you enjoyed the 2025 season, please consider donating to the Trail of Lights by scanning the QR code below:



If you're interested in purchasing a light display contact Dianna Price at [dprice@sherwoodar.gov](mailto:dprice@sherwoodar.gov) for details on purchasing a Trail of Lights display. Take advantage of the best pricing through the end of February.

# Treasure Hunt

Representatives from the Arkansas Auditor of State's Office will be at City Hall to help residents search for unclaimed property through the Great Arkansas Treasure Hunt and begin the claims process.

City Hall 2199 E. Kiehl Ave  
 February 24, 2026 | 9am-1pm

AUDITOR MILLIGAN AND REP. BROWN WILL PRESENT MAYOR HEYE- TOWNSELL WITH A CHECK FOR MORE THAN \$1,000 IN UNCLAIMED FUNDS OWED TO THE CITY OF SHERWOOD AT 9AM

# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

@ SHERWOOD HISTORY AND HERITAGE MUSEUM

In honor of Black History Month, David Fox will lead a presentation and discussion of development of communities around Brush Island, Cato, and Sylvan Hills. All are invited to attend.

**FEBRUARY 21<sup>ST</sup>**  
**MUSEUM OPENS AT 10AM, EVENT STARTS AT 2PM**  
**510 SHERWOOD AVE**

# City of Sherwood presents HEARTS & HUGS Ball

February **15** 2 to 4 pm

1111 W. Maryland Avenue

Families are invited to the Hearts & Hugs Ball, a Valentine themed afternoon for children in Pre-K through 6th grade and their parents or guardians. Enjoy music, dancing, photo opportunities, and sweet memories together. Dress in Valentine or semi-formal attire and celebrate a fun afternoon with someone special. Tickets available at [eventbrite.com](https://www.eventbrite.com)

# Be Fit Be Healthier Be The Best Version of You at the Bill Harmon Recreation Center

Make 2026 your healthiest year yet with the Bill Harmon Recreation Center (BHRC). With diverse amenities and programs, BHRC is your go-to destination for achieving an active and balanced lifestyle.

If you love the water, the indoor 25-yard, 8-lane pool is perfect for swimming laps, joining aquatic fitness classes, or enjoying a refreshing swim. Suitable for all skill levels, the pool offers family swim hours multiple days a week—contact the center for the schedule.

Stay active on the indoor track, designed for walking, jogging, and running in a comfortable, climate-controlled space. Designated lanes allow everyone to move at their own pace.

The weight room is equipped with machines for all major muscle groups, catering to both beginners and experienced lifters. Enhance your workout with cardio machines like treadmills, ellipticals, stationary bikes, and rowers, all customizable to your fitness needs.

From functional strength training to yoga and Zumba, BHRC offers instructor-led fitness classes to suit all abilities. Check out the current class schedule on the next page.

After your workout, freshen up in locker rooms equipped with private showers and lockers. Remember to bring your own towel and lock for convenience.

Whether you're just starting your fitness journey or maintaining your routine, the Bill Harmon Recreation Center has everything you need to succeed.

## **BHRC Hours of Operation:**

**Monday–Thursday: 5:00 AM – 9:00 PM**

**Friday: 5:00 AM – 7:00 PM**

**Saturday: 8:00 AM – 6:00 PM**

**Sunday: 1:00 PM – 6:00 PM**

**Closed major holidays.**



**Scan code to  
learn more**



501-835-6893



51 Shelby Road, Sherwood





# FITNESS CLASS SCHEDULE

## MONDAY

5:15-6AM FUNCTIONAL  
STRENGTH (TIFFANY)

8:10-9:10AM AQUATIC  
AEROBICS (RITA)

## TUESDAY

9AM-10AM CHAIR YOGA  
(DEBBIE)

6PM-7PM ZUMBA  
(ALANA)

## WEDNESDAY

5:15AM-6AM FUNCTIONAL  
STRENGTH (TIFFANY)

8:10-9:10AM AQUATIC  
AEROBICS (RITA)

6:45PM-7:30PM AQUA ZUMBA  
(ASHLEY)

## THURSDAY

6PM-7PM ZUMBA  
(ALANA)

## FRIDAY

5:15-6AM FUNCTIONAL  
STRENGTH (TIFFANY)

8:10-9:10AM AQUATIC  
AEROBICS (RITA)

## SATURDAY

9AM-9:45AM AQUA ZUMBA  
(ASHLEY)

9AM-10AM YOGA  
(KIMBERLY)

## SUNDAY

3:30-4:30 YOGA  
(KIMBERLY)

## NOTES

All regular classes  
are included with  
membership



## Holiday Notice *Presidents' Day*

Monday, February 16, 2026

City offices are closed Monday, February 16, 2026, for Presidents' Day.

The garbage and recycling schedule for the holiday is as follows:

- Garbage routes for Monday, February 16th will be picked up on Tuesday, February 17th.
- Recycling not scheduled for this week.



SHERWOOD PARKS & RECREATION

## SUMMER DAY CAMP

Registration Begins March 17

\$100  
REGISTRATION  
FEE



GRADES 1-6  
WEEKLY FEE:

- \$100 FOR ONE CHILD
- \$150 FOR TWO CHILDREN
- \$200 FOR THREE CHILDREN

Bill Harmon Recreation Center  
51 Shelby Road  
501-835-6893



# BLIND DATE with a pet

CALL THE SHERWOOD HUMANE ANIMAL SHELTER TO SCHEDULE YOUR DATE.  
COMPLETE A SHORT QUESTIONNAIRE WHEN YOU ARRIVE, GET MATCHED WITH  
A FURRY FRIEND, AND SEE IF SPARKS FLY.  
501-834-2287

## UPCOMING EVENTS

# FEBRUARY

February 3: Senior Luncheon @ Senior Center, 11:30 am, PLEASE RSVP 501-834-5770

February 5: Monthly Chamber Luncheon; 11:30 am, The Green Banquet Center, 501-835-7600

February 10: Planning Commission Meeting, 6 pm, Council Chambers

February 15: Hearts and Hugs Valentine's Ball, 2-4pm, Sherwood Forest, see page 11

February 16: Presidents' Day, City Offices Closed, garbage will be picked up on Tuesday, 2/17.

February 20: Youth Baseball/T-ball/Softball Spring registration CLOSES; see right

February 21: Black History Month presentation, Sherwood History and Heritage Museum, see page 11

February 24: City Council Meeting, 6 pm, Council Chambers



**SHERWOOD PARKS & RECREATION**  
**BASEBALL & SOFTBALL**  
**REGISTRATION**  
**JAN 5TH-FEB 20TH, 2026**

REGISTER ONLINE

• \$90 FEE  
 • \$10 EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT UNTIL JAN. 16

501-564-3206 | sherwoodathletics@cityofsherwood.net | 408 Dee Jay Hudson Dr.



March 5: Sherwood Chamber of Commerce Annual Banquet & Community Awards, 501-835-7600

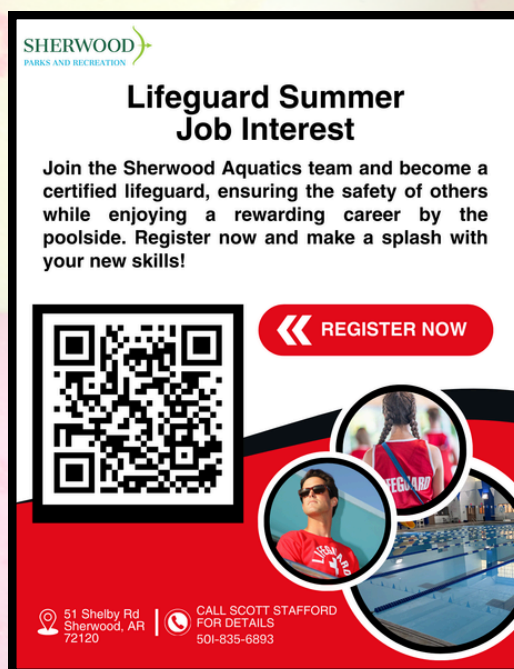
March 4: Advertising & Promotions Commission Meeting, 4pm, Council Chambers

March 8: Daylight Saving Time Begins

March 10: Planning Commission Meeting, 6 pm, Council Chambers

March 17: Summer Day Camp Registration Opens, 501-835-6893

March 30: City Council Meeting, 6 pm, Council Chambers



**SHERWOOD PARKS AND RECREATION**

**Lifeguard Summer Job Interest**

Join the Sherwood Aquatics team and become a certified lifeguard, ensuring the safety of others while enjoying a rewarding career by the poolside. Register now and make a splash with your new skills!

REGISTER NOW

51 Shelby Rd  
 Sherwood, AR 72120

CALL SCOTT STAFFORD FOR DETAILS  
 501-835-6893