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City of Branson

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City to begin fall Citizens Academy September 20

Classes give citizens insight into city government

Branson residents can learn more about the workings of city government, its projects and its goals by signing up for the next Citizens Academy. Classes begin September 20, and citizens can begin registering now.

The Academy is an eight-week session designed to provide citizens with a close up view of all facets of city government – from emergency services and transportation to the business of water and budgeting your tax dollars.

The Academy is set to begin Monday, September 20 at Branson City Hall and continues each Monday night through November 1. The sessions will run from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The eighth and final session will be on Tuesday, November 9, which is a regular Board of Aldermen meeting, and the participants will be recognized by the Mayor and Board for graduation from the Academy.

Branson Public Information Director Jerry Adams said the city conducts a Citizens Academy each spring and fall. Classes are limited to 15 participants, and there is no cost.

"The idea is to give citizens a behind-the-scenes look at city services, and an opportunity to interact with the employees who deliver those services," said Adams. "We hope it results in greater awareness of how those services work and how the functions of city government impact their daily lives."

Learning about the heavy safety equipment firefighters wear and holding a fire hose will help the participants understand how much strength and endurance a firefighter needs to battle a blaze. Touring water and wastewater facilities helps citizens understand the technical expertise and the 24-hour monitoring required by public works employees. Seeing the city's environmental programs will let citizens understand the emphasis placed on protecting our land and water resources.

Participants in the Citizens Academy last spring had high praise for the program.

“Attending the Citizens Academy was an enjoyable experience. Not only did I learn about the city and how each department functions, but I also had fun and met new friends,” said Janet Akers.

“It was amazing and gratifying to know how technologically up-to-date the city is. I highly recommend the experience,” Said Beth Urich

“It’s remarkable what dedication and pride each department we had a chance to visit has in how they serve and shape our community,” said Josh Walters.

To sign-up for the Citizens Academy starting September 20, contact Jerry Adams at Branson City Hall, 337-8526 or e-mail at jadams@bransonmo.gov. A schedule of the fall Academy is also on the city’s website. On the home page, click Citizens Academy.