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News Release

Applications invited for new Community Spirit Award Committee

New board will take on responsibility for Joe B. Avery Community Spirit Award

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (September 6, 2017) — Arkansas City residents are invited to apply now to join a new City committee that will select the annual winner of the Joe B. Avery Community Spirit Award.

The City Commission of Arkansas City voted 4-0 on Tuesday night to create the new Community Spirit Award Committee. The first members of this new committee will be appointed Sept. 19.

“This is a great opportunity for citizens who do not want to attend a lot of meetings or make a huge time commitment to still make a meaningful impact on the lives of their fellow neighbors by honoring their achievements and accomplishments in a public setting,” said Public Information Officer Andrew Lawson.

“Although first preference may go to former members of the Community Cornerstone Award committee or the Human Relations Commission, we want all citizens to feel free to apply for this board.”

The committee will have from five to seven members, each ultimately serving a three-year term.

In 2017-2019, though, some terms will be shortened to one or two years so they can be staggered.

The first duty of the new committee, which is expected to meet in late September or early October, will be to develop criteria and consider candidates for the 2017 Joe B. Avery Community Spirit Award.

City officials hope to tie in the presentation of that award with this year's Arkalalah festivities.

The committee then will be asked to evaluate and possibly make a proposal to the City Commission for a new award, which could be given on a semiannual, quarterly or bimonthly basis, starting in 2018.

Anyone interested in applying for the Community Spirit Award Committee may download and fill out a City of Arkansas City committee volunteer application form in PDF format at <http://bit.ly/AC-app-form> or <http://arkansascityks.gov/Government/Boards/New-Volunteer-Form-Web.pdf>.

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Completed forms should be returned to Lawson at alawson@arkansascityks.gov. They also can be dropped off at the Utility Billing Office or City Clerk's Office on the main floor of City Hall, 118 W. Central.

About the Joe B. Avery Community Spirit Award

Joe B. Avery, a former member of the Arkansas City Human Relations Commission, passed away in 2008 and an award later was created in his honor, called the Joe B. Avery Community Spirit Award.

Avery made a long-term commitment to effecting change in the community by identifying or creating resources that improved the quality of life for those who live in Arkansas City. He gave many years of service to the City in developing conversations and relationships that benefited the greater good.

This award has been bestowed each year since upon a deserving community member who displays the values of community spirit and diversity, as selected by the Human Relations Commission.

The award was created to celebrate individuals who make an effort to enhance the lives of others through service and a passion for creating cooperation and humanity among the citizens of Ark City.

The City Commission voted 5-0 on June 7, 2016, to combine the Human Relations Commission and the Accessibility Advisory Board, creating the Equal Opportunity and Accessibility Advisory Board.

The members of the new board did not wish to continue administering the Joe B. Avery Community Spirit Award, so the new Community Spirit Award Committee was created to take over that duty.

Prior winners of the Joe B. Avery Community Spirit Award include current Equal Opportunity and Accessibility Advisory Board vice chair James Fry (2012) and the late James Watson Jr. (2011).

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