Employee News

New Employees


NEW DATE: The date for the Employee Service Awards has been updated from Thursday, Oct 25 to Thursday, Oct 4.

Save The Date

IPERS Meetings

Are you an IPERS member thinking about retirement in the next few years? IPERS is coming to Hiawatha’s Kirkwood Linn County Regional Center on Sept 10. If you are interested in learning more about retirement and would like to set up an appointment to meet with an IPERS representative, call IPERS at 800-622-3849. There are a limited number of appointments available so call now to hold your spot!
City Manager and Director Updates

Fire Department Achieves Accreditation
The City of Cedar Rapids and the Cedar Rapids Fire Department are pleased to have been recognized by the Center for Public Safety Excellence and the Commission on Fire Accreditation International as achieving accredited agency status. A delegation from the City and Fire Department, including City Manager Jeff Pomeranz, City Councilmember/Public Safety & Youth Services Chairperson Susie Weinacht, Asst Fire Chief Greg Smith, Training Chief Andy Olesen, District Chief Curtis Walser, and Fire Captain Matt Woerner, presented at the Commission on Fire Accreditation International hearings at the Fire-Rescue International in Dallas, Texas last Thursday afternoon.

The CRFD is one of only 5 fire departments in Iowa and 247 worldwide that has earned accreditation from the CFAI, an internationally-recognized benchmark for fire and emergency services.

Accreditation is much more than getting a plaque that says that the CRFD is an accredited agency; it is about validation from fire professionals that our fire department has a strong process of self-assessment, strategic planning and continued improvement toward better business and operational practices that ultimately result in a safer community.

We appreciate the fine work of the Fire Department in accomplishing this important distinction, as well as the support of the entire City Council and other City departments that supported the accreditation process.

Cedar Rapids Named a Certified 4-STAR Community
After almost a year of work by City staff and community partners, Cedar Rapids was recently named a Certified 4-STAR Community. You’re invited to join the City of Cedar Rapids’ Open House and Celebration on Tuesday, Aug 28, from 4:00 – 5:30 p.m. in City Hall’s Training Room. The event will be an open house format with brief opening remarks. City staff will be divided among the eight STAR goal areas and will speak to attendees on what we learned from STAR. We are excited to celebrate this extremely high achievement, as well as discuss opportunities for continued improvement. Early next week, Council will have access to the STAR Report and a 2-page infographic showing STAR highlights and background. The City’s next step is to create our Sustainable City Government Plan with guidance from STAR and EnvisionCR.

Economic Development Grants
On Tuesday’s consent agenda are 17 resolutions approving the City’s annual Economic Development (ED) Grant payments. The ED grant payments reimburse the businesses/developers all or a portion of the increased taxes generated by the respective projects. The ED Grants are being made based on the terms of the respective Development Agreements for the projects which were previously approved by City Council. A list of the projects, payment amounts, and additional information is provided in the cover memo. This mechanism is one of the two economic development incentives available to the City and is referred to as tax increment financing (TIF).

The Iowa Department of Management annually provides a list of all communities in Iowa using TIF, the amount of total taxable value in the community, and the amount of taxable TIF value being leveraged. The report for FY19 shows that the Cedar Rapids is leveraging 4.2% of its total taxable value for the use of TIF. This percentage ranks Cedar Rapids at 266 of a total of 343 communities using TIF. The following is a comparison of other communities’ percentages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altoona</td>
<td>26.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coralville</td>
<td>20.98%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiawatha</td>
<td>15.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Liberty</td>
<td>15.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dubuque</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Des Moines</td>
<td>11.65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Des Moines</td>
<td>10.37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marion</td>
<td>6.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar Falls</td>
<td>6.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Davenport</td>
<td>4.59%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cedar Rapids</td>
<td>4.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iowa City</td>
<td>2.28%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For additional information please contact Jennifer Pratt.

Crisis Intervention Training
Last week, Aug 7-11, the Cedar Rapids Police Department, supported by the National Alliance on Mental Illness, hosted its first Crisis Intervention Team training at the Cedar Rapids Police Department. The 40-hour training program covered a variety of topics including information about specific mental illnesses and techniques on speaking to subjects who are in crisis. The goal was to train attendees so that they have options when dealing with individuals in crisis and make those encounters as safe as possible for everyone. The overarching goal is to create diversion from jail whenever alternatives are possible. The week’s training provided a number of resources to encourage diversion from incarceration. This first training consisted of CRPD Officers, School Resource Officers, Dispatchers, SAFE-CR staff, and the Eastern Iowa Airport Police Department.

The CRPD will be encouraging other law enforcement agencies in Linn County to attend future training sessions as these agencies often share the same resources countywide. The next training session for additional officers and staff will be in November. When individuals have access and utilize the necessary resources, there is a decrease in calls for service and there is less likelihood of incarceration. By working with individuals who have suicidal ideation, depression, family issues, substance abuse, or housing issues, the impact on police resources is reduced.
City Manager and Director Updates (cont)

Welcoming Week Proclamation
A proclamation will be read at the Aug 14 City Council meeting to formally announce our membership with Welcoming America as a Welcoming City, as well as to kick-off marketing for “Welcoming Week” Sept 14-23.

Welcoming America is an organization aimed at creating a network of cities and counties across the US guided by the principle that “welcoming communities foster a culture and policy environment that makes it possible for newcomers of all backgrounds to feel valued and to fully participate alongside their neighbors in the social, civic, and economic fabric of their adopted hometowns.” More information about Welcoming America is available here: https://www.welcomingamerica.org/

While the foundation of Welcoming America is based on making sure immigrants and refugees are accepted in the community, we, along with many other communities are broadening this message to truly encompass the value of all residents. The purpose of Welcoming Week is to use the power of the City organization to promote a variety of community events, which are listed on a page hosted through GO Cedar Rapids, aimed at getting residents engaged with their neighbors. So far we have a speakers series through Civil Rights, a group of international residents who promote a soccer club, and some events from the Diversity forum at Iowa Ideas listed. We would like to see a variety of events, including cooking demonstrations, storytelling, dancing, resource meetings — anything that is open to the public and expands on residents being able to experience cultural diversity of all kinds. This is one more way that the City can promote a message of inclusivity and encourage our residents to feel more rooted in our community. You can view welcoming week events at www.welcomingCR.com.

Sign up to receive important employee information by text message
Have you signed up your personal phone to receive important employee information via text message? Signing up today will allow you to receive important employee information and emergency alerts right on your phone. This communication channel will be used in emergencies to relay critical information. It will also be used periodically to send reminders and information regarding benefits, internal events, and other timely internal information. You will also have the option to receive public Cedar Rapids news that is sent to residents, such as city events, programs and services.

Please click here to sign up to receive employee related communication via text
Together we can commit to safety through:

Management Leadership + Worker Participation + Finding and Fixing Hazards

What does being committed to safety look like in action?
Watch for this logo, increased visibility and opportunities to get involved.

*Next week’s topic “Why Commit?”*
We Serve Enthusiastically

The first Core Value of the City of Cedar Rapids is “We Serve Enthusiastically,” which can also be described as Going the Extra Mile. To better understand how serving enthusiastically occurs within the City, I recently spoke with our Building Services team about the concept.

What does the city value of serving enthusiastically by going the extra mile mean to you and your team?

In Building Services, our primary goal is to protect the health, safety and welfare of our community through the implementation of codes. Our Building Services staff serves our public in a professional manner and provides the expertise needed to solve the issues facing our citizens or our construction community. Whether that is assisting an individual property owner with construction of a garage, or a commercial contractor with scheduling of inspection to keep the project moving forward, staff have embraced serving enthusiastically and going the extra mile to serve our public.

Can you provide an example of how your team demonstrated this value?

Recently, our office was asked to partner in the Habitat for Humanity Builders Blitz, a program that builds three homes in a week. This requires our office to be onsite to perform the needed building inspections as the homes are being built, which includes visiting the site multiple times a day to keep up with the construction schedule. It is a fast-paced week and staff enjoys being part of this effort.

In addition to projects like Habitat for Humanity Builders Blitz, Building Services staff make an effort to educate our citizens on code requirements to keep citizens safe and support our construction community. This entails performing rental inspections, nuisance inspections or building inspections. Staff serve by understanding our customer’s needs and going the extra mile.

In the coming weeks, we will take a closer look at how serving enthusiastically is being demonstrated by teams throughout the city. Share examples of how your team is demonstrating the city’s core values.

For more information about the organizational health initiative at the City of Cedar Rapids contact: Sue Sager, Organizational Development Manager, s.sager@cedar-rapids.org, 319-777-1699.
Save the Date!

2018 Employee Wellness Fair

Presented by the Cedar Rapids Wellness Ambassadors
Wednesday, September 12
1:00pm - 4:00pm
City Services Center
Large Vehicle Bay

- Over 30 Vendors in attendance offering free SWAG
- Visit 20 vendors to be eligible to win one of over 20 AWESOME door prizes
- FREE popcorn
- Get your blood pressure checked by a professional
- Have your blood typed by Mississippi Blood Center
- Free chair massages

*Received 25 Wellness Points for attending
One ‘Wellness Hour’ may be used for this event.
Time away from your normal work schedule must be approved by your supervisor.
For questions, contact your Wellness Ambassador.

Water Conservation Rebates

The “Water Wise” program saves residents money, limits excess water runoff, and conserves water.
City employees may qualify for the Water Wise program. The program allows any Cedar Rapids water customer to receive up to a $75 rebate when replacing an old toilet with a high-efficiency toilet. A $50 rebate is also available for the purchase and installation of rain sensors for lawn irrigation systems.

Save the date for the Especially For You® Race Against Breast Cancer.
Sunday, October 7
Mercy’s Hall-Perrine Cancer Center, Cedar Rapids
Online registration is open!

click here to register online as a participant on the City of Cedar Rapids team

Take the CHALLENGE

Cedar Rapids City Manager Jeff Pomeranz challenges every citizen to collect at least one bag of litter each year to help CleanUpCR!
You can help make downtown Cedar Rapids litter-free with our end-of-summer cleanup event —

WHEN: Monday, September 17 at 6 PM
WHERE: McGrath Amphitheatre
(475 1st Street SW)
WHY: Meet other residents who take pride in making a positive difference in our community!

VISIT www.CleanUpCR.com
Wellness Newsletter
National Immunization Awareness Month

Black Bean & Corn Quesadillas

Ingredients:
- 1 8oz. bag shredded Mexican blend cheese
- 8 whole wheat flour tortillas
- 1 ½ cups bottled black beans & corn salsa
- 1 avocado peeled & chopped
- Plain Greek yogurt (or sour cream)

Instructions:
- Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. Divide cheese & avocado evenly among tortillas. Top each tortilla with 1 Tbsp. salsa. Fold tortillas in half, pressing gently.
- Heat large skillet over medium heat. Cook two of the quesadillas for 2-3 minutes or until lightly browned & cheese is melted. Remove from skillet & place on baking sheet. Keep warm in the preheated oven.
- Repeat. Serve with plain Greek yogurt & remaining salsa.

Week 1 – Back to School!
Getting vaccinated per the recommended immunization schedule is one of the most important things a parent can do to protect their child’s health. There are many grade schools and colleges that require students to be up-to-date and covered by certain vaccines.

Week 2 – Babies and Young Children
Vaccines give parents the power to protect their children from serious disease. Vaccines protect babies from 14 different diseases by the time they are 2-years old.

When children aren’t vaccinated, they’re at risk for disease and can spread disease to others in their play groups, classrooms, and child care centers.

Week 3 – Preteens/Teens
Keeping up-to-date on your child’s vaccines will ensure a healthy future for your kids. Pre-teens/teens need 4 vaccines to protect against serious disease:
1. Meningococcal conjugate: protects against Meningitis and blood infections
2. HPV vaccine: protects against cancers caused by HPV
3. Tdap: protects against tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough (pertussis)
4. A yearly flu vaccine: protect against seasonal flu

Week 4 – Adults
Remember, immunization isn’t just for kids. To stay protected against serious illnesses like the flu, measles, and pneumonia, adults need to be vaccinated, too!
- Adults 50+: recommended to receive the shingles vaccine
- Adults 60+: recommended to receive both pneumococcal vaccines

This month is an annual observance held in August to highlight the importance of vaccinations for people of all ages.

For more information, contact Health Solutions at (888) 362-5920.
Flood Control: Investing in a Strong Future

City Council members Scott Overland and/or Tyler Olson will speak to employees about Flood Control System funding, and offer their ideas and perspective regarding the City's funding commitment. Flood Control System Program Manager Rob Davis will also provide an update on the engineering of the system and what residents can anticipate in the next few years.

Thursday, August 23
12:00 – 1:00 pm
CSC, Five Seasons Conference Room

FREE LUNCH FROM JIMMY JOHNS!

Please RSVP by Friday, August 17
to participate and reserve your lunch.
RSVP by emailing: citymanager@cedar-rapids.org