Employee News

Employee Retirements


Orval Schrock, UTIL – retiring Sept 22. Orval started with the City July 17, 1989. His current position is Water Maintenance Repair Worker II.


Employment Opportunities

Accounts Payable Specialist

Parks & Grounds Maintenance/Repair Worker I

If you have questions about any of the opportunities, please contact Jenelle Sisneros, 286-5001.

Here is a link to view and print all job postings.

2017 Annual City of Cedar Rapids Employee Health & Safety Fair

Wednesday, September 27
City Manager and Director Update

CSC Incident Update
Police Chief Wayne Jerman and several City Directors met at the Police Station on Tuesday, September 5 to discuss steps to move forward on employee training and City facility assessments following the August 23 incident at the City Services Center. This is part of an ongoing effort by police commanders and directors to review the CSC incident with the goal of providing a means to improve employee response to active threats.

Police Lieutenant Charlie Fields and Facilities Maintenance Manager Brent Schlotfeldt were also part of this group. Lieutenant Fields has extensive training and has presented numerous programs about active threats in the workplace. Schlotfeldt will be assisting with an assessment of City facilities. Both of these managers will be an important part of developing further training and response plans.

Director Nic Roberts, the City’s Chief Information Officer, is securing a notification application that will provide emergency alerts to City employees’ computers and City owned cellular phones. This would be an alerting system that would inform employees of potentially hazardous or dangerous conditions or situations (i.e. active threats, severe weather, hazardous materials situation, etc.) and would also be available to subscribe to from personal cell phones.

There will be an update provided at the Sept 21 Manager’s Meeting and in future employee newsletters.

PCI Project
At next Tuesday’s City Council meeting, staff will present a request for economic development incentives for the Physicians’ Clinic of Iowa (PCI) Phase 2 project. PCI is proposing the construction of a 98,000 sq. ft. medical office facility with a 540 space parking ramp, resulting in an estimated investment of $30 million. The medical office building is proposed on 10th St SE, across from the existing medical facility. PCI is requesting, as the form of City incentive, to offset the cost of the parking ramp, which is expected to be up to $9.5 million. Under the proposed arrangement, the City would bond for ramp cost and disburse the funds in installments during construction. The tax increment revenue generated by the building and parking ramp would be used to repay the bond debt.

Affordable Housing Projects
On next Tuesday’s City Council agenda are actions related to three affordable housing projects. The projects were recently awarded competitive Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) through the Iowa Finance Authority based on the City’s support of the application and provision of local matching funds. The action items on Tuesday will establish Urban Revitalization Areas for the projects, providing the mechanism of the City’s financial support. In total, the projects will create 148 new housing units with a total investment of $29.6 million. The City’s match through property tax exemption is estimated to be $1.28 million.

The projects are as follows:

- Crestwood Ridge Apartments (CommonBond Communities)
  1200 Edgewood Rd NW
  45 housing units
  $9.1 Million investment

- Kingston Family Apartments (TWG Development)
  2nd & 3rd St/Diagonal Dr SW
  52 units
  $10.8 Million investment

- Cypress Pointe Apartments (Miller-Valentine Group)
  Jacolyn Dr & 12th Ave SW
  51 units
  $9.7 Million Investment

Solar Group Buy Ends Sept. 30
The Cedar Rapids and Linn County Solar Group Buy entered its fourth and final month. September 30 is the last day participants will be able to sign a contract for solar for their homes (roof or ground) and participate in this group buy program. Since June, the Group Buy program has seen 34 households sign a contract to install solar for a total of 230kW. This Solar Group Buy is the first of its kind in Iowa and makes solar energy more affordable and accessible for interested homeowners in Linn County.

The many partners working to make this possible include: Midwest Renewable Energy Association, City of Cedar Rapids, Linn County, The Nature Conservancy of Iowa, Indian Creek Nature Center, and Iowa 350. Also, Alliant Energy has attended all 23 Solar Power Hours to answer questions and speak with prospective solar customers. More information is available at www.SolarizeLinnCounty.com

(continued on following page)
City Manager and Director Team Update

Conversions, Signals, and Downtown Roadway Work

2nd Avenue in Wellington Heights was restriped for two-way traffic this week, between 13th Street and 19th Street. Downtown, pre-conversion work continues, which includes curb and sidewalk work. In addition, the roadway on 2nd Ave was restriped from four lanes to two lanes, which will transition to two-way traffic next spring. Pedestrian signing was added on 3rd Street at 2nd Avenue to inform drivers to yield to pedestrians.

Signals: On 2nd Avenue, traffic signal removals have occurred at 2nd St, 3rd St, 5th St, 7th St and 8th St SE. The signal at 1st Street SW and 3rd Avenue SW was converted to a 4-way stop to improve traffic flow and reduce delay at the intersection. Crews from the Streets and Traffic Divisions assisted in this project. In addition to signal removals, staff has also worked on retiming existing signals. The signal timing was updated on 3rd Avenue, between 3rd Street and 5th Street to improve traffic flow and reduce delay. The signal timing was also updated this week to improve the traffic flow on 1st Avenue, between 1st Street east to Cottage Grove Avenue SE. This also included updating the signals on 3rd Avenue and A Avenue at 7th and 8th Street to improve the traffic flow to and from I-380, and eliminate the gridlock at this junction during peak traffic times.

Mt. Vernon Road Linn County Project

The Linn County Secondary Roads Department is working on a project on Mount Vernon Road, east of city limits. The project stretches from just east of East Post Road to Vernon Valley Drive (near HWY 151). The project began in May, and is under Linn County forces. Residents can sign up to receive updates from Linn County on their website: http://www.linncounty.org/133/Engineering-Secondary-Road-Department

Petition against Noelridge Pollinator Zones

A citizen opposed to the pollinator zone at Noelridge Park has posted flyers throughout the park system promoting a petition on Change.org requesting support for the elimination of pollinator zones in signature parks. Twenty signatures have been obtained since July. The basis for the petition is continued assertion that safety hazards will be caused by the pollinator habitat, as well as a reduction of active recreational opportunities.

Staff and Council have had numerous phone and email conversations with this resident about the project this year.

The following information has been provided to her.

- Noelridge Park and other signature park areas are important to the 1,000 Acres Pollinator Initiative because they are located in a suburban area where pollinator habitat has been lost.
- This past spring, only 8 of 103 acres at Noelridge Park were seeded.
- The pollinator zones at Noelridge were designed specifically to complement the park landscape, use patterns, educational opportunities and watershed management already in the park.
- Extensive green space remains for special events, team sports, pick up sports and passive recreation.
- The insects being referenced in the complaint are not bees, but yellow jacket wasps that are not attracted to flowers. They do not typically inhabit the prairie itself, but are most common in a lawn setting, under debris, or on the edge of wooded areas as described by Rich Patterson and other sources.
- Species of native pollinators and honey bees that rely on these habitats are not aggressive and rarely sting unless trapped against a person's skin.
- Community input and support was gathered from the Noelridge Neighborhood Association, Coe College, CRCSD Cross-Country programs and the Friends of Noelridge Volunteer 501c3.

The response received from Noelridge user groups has been overwhelmingly positive. The project has multiple benefits in addition to boosting local monarch and pollinator populations including aesthetics and storm water management. It has been featured in local and national media reaching close to 72 million people. Teachers have even expressed interest in using the pollinator zones as part of their instruction, and funding for interpretive signage to compliment walking paths through the pollinator zones is in place. Cedar Rapids Parks management continues to advise groups including Rockwell Collins, the Cedar Rapids Community School District, and other municipalities and private organizations to provide knowledge and guidance for creating similar pollinator zones at corporate, public and educational facilities around the community.
Mercy Medical Center’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a benefit provided by your employer for you and your dependent family members to assist with relationships, family, work, emotional, and mental health concerns. There is no cost to you or your family members when using EAP services. Individual, couples, and family counseling are offered in a client-centered, supportive environment to help you and your family achieve health, balance, and well-being.

**Appointments**

To schedule an EAP appointment, simply contact Mercy EAP with your name, place of employment and area(s) of concern. An intake appointment will be scheduled as soon as possible.

Mercy EAP is offered at several convenient MercyCare locations in the Cedar Rapids metro area. When calling to make an appointment, please let us know which MercyCare location is most convenient for you and your family. Please call 398-6694 or 800-383-6694 to schedule an appointment.

**Meroy EAP can assist with:**

- Anxiety
- Anger
- Communication skills
- Depression
- Divorce, blended families and co-parenting
- Emotional/mental health concerns
- Family/relationship concerns
- Grief / loss
- Resolving conflict(s)
- Stress
- Trauma/abuse
- Work/career concerns
- Alcohol/drug abuse
- Financial and legal counseling (available by referral in the Cedar Rapids metro area)

**Confidentiality**

To ensure your confidentiality, the following precautions will be taken:

- No information will be released without your informed written consent
- Only non-identifying data on EAP usage will be provided to your employer
- Confidentiality may be waived if there is a clear and present danger to human life
- Client records remain the property of Mercy EAP Services

**Eligibility**

EAP services can be used by you and your dependent family members. There is no cost to you or your family members when using EAP services. For more information on your EAP benefits, please contact Human Resources, 286-5000 or Mercy EAP.

Visit us online at: [www.mercycare.org/EAP](http://www.mercycare.org/EAP)
The CR Employee Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Team invites you to attend the 2017 Latino Festival. Come celebrate and experience the richness and diversity of the Latin American culture. Bring your family and friends to enjoy live music performances, food from various countries, and many activities for kids!

Latino Festival of Cedar Rapids
Sunday, September 17
11 a.m. - 5 p.m.
McGrath Amphitheatre

The Diversity Team recognizes the importance of community outreach, and has attended several events and celebrations over the summer. Be sure to stop by our booth at the Latino Festival this weekend to say hello!

Fall Events at Ushers Ferry

Fall is in the air and it’s time to have some fun! Located in beautiful Seminole Valley, Ushers Ferry takes you back in time to the early days of Linn County and provides many opportunities for learning, celebration and family fun. Every Wednesday night in September and October the village offers fall hayrack rides with a bonfire, cocoa and craft and the historical buildings are open to tour until sunset.

The recently restored Schulze Cottage is a beautiful venue for intimate programs such as the Downton Abbey Tea Party on October 8th, where guests may enjoy a taste of period foods, games, and social activities. For larger programs bustling with activity, visitors will not want to miss the Fall Family Festival on September 17th, a free event which will feature historical demonstrations in the buildings, hayrack rides, games, as well as an opportunity to visit the Ushers Ferry lodge and learn more about the planned facility changes which will make the village more accessible and enjoyable for all visitors.

Finally, Halloween enthusiasts will want to make sure to attend the Safe Halloween Trick or Treat on October 22nd with games, costume contests, and trick-or-treating through the village sponsored by local community businesses and organizations. Look for more information in the fall PLAY guide at crrec.org.

Wednesday, October 4, 2017
Noon

The Downtown Cedar Rapids walk will have 3 starting points. All 3 groups will begin walking at noon and meet approximately 15 minutes later at Greene Square. Walkers can enjoy food from Hy-Vee’s Grab & Go Grill, socialize, take pictures with mascots, and enjoy tailgate-style entertainment.

Starting Points:
1. McGrath Amphitheatre
2. NewBo City Market
3. Grant Wood Studio parking lot
Help honor employees for their years of dedicated service to the City of Cedar Rapids. Please RSVP and submit payment to your department contact by Sept 22, 2017.

$5 Payable by cash or check to “City of Cedar Rapids” by Sept 22. You must register prior to the deadline! No late reservations or walk-ins will be allowed.

If you have food sensitivities, we have ingredient labels available so you can make informed decisions. To see the labels, you may contact us at citymanager@cedar-rapids.org ahead of time or review the labels at the event.

Donations at City sites will be collected from September 11-22

Look for donation locations in these buildings:
City Services Center
City Hall
Central Fire
CR Police Department
CR Water Building

Coats should be new or gently used, sized Infant, Child, Teen or Adult

*Gloves, mittens, hats, scarfs and snow pants are also accepted

Questions? Please contact Jourdan Jiruska at j.jiruska@cedar-rapids.org
Wellness Champion

Callie Crandall
Library

Accomplishment
I have lost 60 pounds by changing my diet and exercising. I do 60-90 minute cardio workouts at the gym or on my bicycle 3-5 days a week. Additionally, I eat healthier foods and quit drinking pop. I keep track of my exercise, food, and water intake through my Fitbit which I have found to be very helpful during my weight loss journey.

I was motivated to start losing weight from the city’s C.O.U.R Weight Loss Challenge in January. I knew I wanted to lose weight but I just kept putting it off thinking there would be a better time to start. As the pounds came off, I was motivated to keep going because my clothes fit better and people acknowledged and encouraged my success.

Benefit from Accomplishment
Because of the weight loss I sleep better, have much more energy, and clearer skin. Most importantly, this success has elevated my self-esteem.

Future Goals:
My future wellness goals include continuing to live a healthy lifestyle by exercising and eating healthy. I would like to lose 10-15 more pounds.

Callie’s Top Tips
- Make a list before going to the grocery store, stick to it, and do not go when you're hungry.
- Drink plenty of water. It keeps you hydrated and also curbs hunger.
- Focus on what you CAN eat rather than what you're avoiding.
- Allow yourself to indulge in a treat occasionally.