

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE

February 28, 2023

Message from the Manager:

It is hard to believe we are entering the third month of 2023! Where do you stand on your journey toward your hopes and goals? The new year always begins with such enthusiasm for new beginnings. Many times, by this point, we find ourselves either off pace or even off track in accomplishing what we set out to achieve. HR has been sending out encouraging challenges and information to help us all focus on and improve our own mental health. What are you and I doing to make sure we recharge ourselves? If we are to achieve our goals, we will need to find times of recharging along the way.

Mentors and leaders are found throughout all levels of our organization. One of my mentors in what living recharged looks like is HR's Melonie Matthewson. I am sure Mel is a mentor for many of you as well. Mel brings a joy and energy to her work every day that is enduring. The Mel of yesterday is the Mel of today and tomorrow. Melonie greeted me when I first arrived in Harker Heights in 2004. My twin boys were just six months old at the time and yet Mel still refers to them as her babies. When my boys, 19 years old now, stop by City Hall, one of the people they want to see is Melonie. Mel has an impact on all she encounters.

Melonie surely grapples with the same things in life that we all do. Family concerns, days where she does not feel 100%, work issues, co-worker concerns and the list goes on and on. Mel faces the same wins and losses in life that we all do. What makes Mel different is that, no matter the circumstances, she finds a way to recharge and bring encouragement every day! We have all heard the adage about wishing one could bottle youth, well I'd love to bottle whatever Mel uses to recharge!

So, how does Mel do it? Well I asked and this is what she shared: *"It is easy to have energy all day when you work at a place that values all of its people. It makes it so easy to love what you do and appreciate your co-workers. Especially when your management team and work family is as AWESOME as the one we have. So, thank you for being the type of manager that cares for his people. There is a saying that when you get paid to do what you love it is no longer a job. This is the best place to work."*

Wow! How humbling and challenging is Mel's response! It's clear to me that Mel has a great love for our organization and people. Mel feels the value we place on all people and for her that combines with her own personal core beliefs. Mel believes in our organization and our goals. She sees herself not as an employee filling a job description, she is a team member doing her part to help us achieve our goals. Our destination is Mel's destination. These things fuel Mel in a way that enables her to bring the same enthusiasm day in and day out. Thank you, Mel, for your example to us all!

I'm excited to be on this journey with a team that is so passionate about service. You all are making a difference and it's a beautiful thing to behold!

David

"Each person deserves a day away in which no problems are confronted, no solutions searched for. Each of us needs to withdraw from the cares which will not withdraw from us." – Maya Angelou

"Time for a cool change

I know that it's time for a cool change

Now that my life is so prearranged

I know that it's time for a cool, cool, cool change" – Cool Change - Song by the Little River Band

General Updates:

New Hires:

Welcome to all our new hires:

Kiarrah Carlisle hired for the position of Athletics Coordinator on February 2nd.

Tracy Zynda hired for the position of Deputy Court Clerk on February 6th.

Wilson Riley hired for the position of Support Clerk on February 7th.

Wesley Alvarez hired for the position of Athletics/Aquatics Coordinator on February 13th.

Promotions:

Congratulations to all those promoted:

Kellie Mozek promoted to the position of Driver/Pump Operator on February 4th.

Patrick Wilson promoted to the position of FOG/Collections Operator on February 18th.

Accomplishments:

Finance receives Certificate of Achievement for Excellence in Financial Reporting.

Library receives Texas Municipal Library Director's Association Excellence Award for 2022.

HR receives "We Hire Vets" award from the Texas Workforce Commission.

Cen-Tex Sustainable Communities Partnership recognized as Phantom Warrior (Yvonne Spell is the Chairperson).

March "5-A-Day" Challenge: HR has the "5-A-Day" challenge planned for March. This challenges us to eat five servings of fruits and vegetables a day. The challenge is intended to make us more aware of our intake of fruits and vegetables (or lack thereof). Check you emails or see HR for a handy calendar to track your progress! Employees that complete the challenge will receive one hour extra for lunch or jean day, to include being entered in a drawing for a Hamilton Beach Shakes and Smoothies personal blender!

Former Employee Writes to Thank the City: One of the biggest compliments an organization can get is when former employees thank us for their time with us. We received a letter from former Parks' employee Byrale Carter recently. Byrale did an outstanding job for our citizens assisting with the running of our athletic programs. I received many compliments on Byrale and his positive attitude. Byrale's letter is heartwarming. He thanked the City for "a memorable experience in" his career. He shared his love for our employees and our programs, specifically calling out our All Ability Sports saying, "I love those kids so much." Byrale has a profitable and portable skill set

because his base is rooted in servant leadership. While we will miss him in the City, we know he is destined for much greater things in the future!

February Kudos Award Winner – Gary Bates: Each month we celebrate the individual who has the most kudos acknowledgements. This month that honor fell to Gary Bates! Great job Mr. Bates supporting all our departments!

Spotlight on Service:

Nate Nesbit Praised: I recently wrote to Public Works' Director Mark Hyde about the good work of Nate Nesbit at our transfer site. I wanted to express my admiration and thanks to Nate for the level of customer service he gives our citizens. His position is one that interacts with the public as much or more than other positions such as utility billing. Nate is always a friendly face and is eager to help all those who come to the drop site. He really paints a very nice picture of our organization by his actions. It is clear he has a servant's heart and is a role model to all of us.

Genelle Rodriguez-Otero Goes Above and Beyond: Court's Genelle Rodriguez-Otero recently assisted a high school student who had some fines due to the Court and who Genelle found out was homeless. Genelle and KISD's Homeless Assistance Program were able to find some assistance for the student. Genelle also developed a way for the student to repay his fines via attendance and hard work in his classes. Genelle's actions show what a servant's heart looks like. I am so very proud of Genelle and her concern for others.

HR Hits a Homerun: Park's Jonathan Hanson wrote to HR to thank them for their assistance. He wrote: "We just wanted to reach out to you guys and extend our gratitude for helping out with all of the coach's background checks for this upcoming teeball/softball/baseball season. It was a tremendous help and is greatly appreciated. You guys knocked it out of the park!"

Lyndsey Amundson Thanked: HR's Lyndsey Amundson was thanked by HR Director Leona Clay for her good work. Leona wrote: "I appreciate you streamlining the volunteer process. We are so lucky to have you on our team."

Chuck Adams Gets it Done: A citizen called in to thank Public Works' Chuck Adams. Chuck assisted the citizen with an issue with their trash can. The citizen stated that it was a privilege to have someone like him working in our community.

Gary Bates Assists: Planning Director Kristina Ramirez to thank IT Director Gary Bates. She wrote: "Just a quick note to say thank you for your help this morning. My staff was very grateful for your assistance in setting up for the contractor's meeting this morning. You were there to test the microphones but when you saw the room was not set up you stepped in and helped to physically set up the room without even being asked. Without your assistance, we would not have been ready in time for the meeting. Thanks again for going above and beyond for the team."

Lieutenant Jack Wallace and Detective Yesmarie Burgos-Figueroa Acknowledged: IT Director Gary Bates wrote to thank Lieutenant Detective Jack Wallace and Detective Yesmarie Burgos-Figueroa. He wrote: "Lieutenant Jack Wallace did an outstanding job ensuring that I had the necessary resources available to complete my tasking in a timely manner and that Detective

Yesmarie Burgos-Figueroa personally assisted me in the removal of the drives and escort duty to ensure that there was no breakage in chain-of-custody protocol.”

Gary Bates Receives Gratitude: Police Chief Hawkins wrote to thank IT Director Gary Bates. Chief Hawkins stated, “I wanted to take the opportunity to express my gratitude for all of the assistance that you provided to us yesterday during our serious incident. Your willingness to come to work in the early hours allowed us to overcome the technical issues that presented itself. Thank you for your assistance.”

Calvin Fleming Volunteers: City Secretary Julie Helsham shared her thanks to Code Enforcement Officer Calvin Fleming for volunteering to assist the Court’s prosecutor. Planning Director Kristina Ramirez wrote to Calvin: “Just a quick note to say thank you for volunteering to assist the prosecutor for the past two Court dates. Ms. Julie told me what a big help you have been with the effective processing of code cases with the new prosecutor. She said your input on the process and explanations of how cases are processed on our end helped both her and the prosecutor understand our regulations and processes better. She also said that you have been really helpful in explaining the compliance portion of the process to our residents who have appeared in court. Thank you again for volunteering and for taking the time to break down what you do for all to understand.”

Detective Sgt. King and Officer Barnstable Bring a Smile: HR Director Leona Clay wrote to Chief Hawkins about the positive attitude of Detective Sgt. King and Officer Barnstable. Leona wrote, “I want you to know how much we appreciate Johnny King and Andrew Barnstable. They come to City Hall every morning with a smile on their face and are always willing to help. We are so fortunate to have such amazing employees working for the City.”