

## CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE

March 31, 2023

### Message from the Manager:

Here I stand with hand raised again. My City Manager's Updates are often on subjects that challenge me. This one is no different. It hits home with me and I hope you find some benefit in it as well. A college football coach that I greatly respect was recently videoed giving a speech to motivate his team. In that speech he talked about the difference between "I have to" and "I get to." What a difference those two simple phrases mean in how we approach life!

The coach asked a question that resonated with his players and with me, "when did we go from the excitement of "I get to" to "I have to."?" As a kid growing up, words "I get to" were more my attitude of life. As a young adult learning new lessons and exploring the world "I get to" also resonated easily with me. Somewhere along the way that changed to "I have to." The ruts we wear in life in terms of our personal life and professional lives somewhere along our journey resulted in an attitude change. Now, whatever the task, "I have to." So why does it matter which attitude we approach life with? If we want to fully achieve our goals, hopes and dreams then an "I get to" attitude is necessary!

So how do I get to, "I get to"? Limit and quiet distractions in your life. That includes things like social media, news coverage, and any other things that are a time sink and places of negativity. Do things that help you recharge. What do you enjoy doing? Do more of that! Guard your time for those that deserve it – your family and close friends. Always remember your blessings! I had a discussion just this week that kings of old would have loved to enjoy the hot and cold running water that we have in our homes. We just miss so many of the blessings that surround us while we get to live beyond the comfort of kings! Know your goals, hopes and dreams – write them down and develop a plan to achieve them. Live in the moment – be present and mindful. If we limit distractions, recharge, understand our blessings, have clear direction, and live purposefully then our internal narrative transforms to "I get to".

One of my life's blessings is that **I get to** serve alongside you all! **I get to** be a part of a team of servant leaders. **I get to** help make a difference in the lives of our citizens. **I get to** hear of the many beautiful stories of service that you all write. **I get to** serve a Council that puts the needs of citizens at the forefront of all their decisions. Thank you for allowing me to **get to** join you on this journey, a better team I could not ask for!

David

*"This is the highest wisdom that I own; freedom and life are earned by those alone who conquer them each day anew."*  
– Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

*"Ain't nothin' gonna break my stride  
Nobody gonna slow me down  
Oh no, oh no, I got to keep on moving  
Ain't nothin' gonna break my stride"*

*I'm running and I won't touch ground*

*Oh no, I got to keep on moving* – Song **Break My Stride** by Matthew Wilder

## **General Updates:**

### **New Hires:**

Welcome to all our new hires:

Troy McGinn hired for the position of Parks Light Equipment Operator on March 1<sup>st</sup>

Kayla Seymour hired for the position of Vet Technician on March 14<sup>th</sup>

Melanie Ross hired for the position of Telecommunicator on March 20<sup>th</sup>

Douglas Sauer hired for the position of Aquatics Supervisor on March 31<sup>st</sup>

### **Promotions:**

Congratulations to all those promoted:

Justin Elliott promoted to Fire Lieutenant on March 4<sup>th</sup>

Justin Read promoted to Driver/Pump Operator on March 4<sup>th</sup>

Leslie Itibus promoted to Records Clerk on March 18<sup>th</sup>

Benjamin Becerril promoted to Crew Leader on March 25<sup>th</sup>

### **Accomplishments:**

Courts receives the MTSI Traffic Safety Award

David “Alex” McCoy achieves Code Enforcement Officer in Training certification from TDLR

Melissa Duenas achieves Certified Court Clerk Level 1

**Fire Chief Paul Sims to Retire:** Fire Chief Paul Sims announced his retirement from the City effective April 28. A come and go reception for Chief Sims will be held on April 28 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Central Fire Station. We congratulate Chief Sims on this milestone and wish him all the best in his retirement!

**March Kudos Award Winners:** Congratulations to our March Kudos Award Winners HR’s Lyndsey Amundson and Courts’ Catharina Hoffman. These two fine employees’ work was noted and acknowledged by others. We are so proud of them both and how they represent the organization. They are role models for us all. Many more Kudos Awards to come throughout the organization!

**April’s Challenge – Bounce Back:** During this 4-week challenge, you will learn simple skills to help you build your resilience and come back stronger, so that you can live a much more happier, healthier life. There are different goals and activities each week. Check your emails or visit HR for more information on signing up and on participation.

**Food Drive:** The Activities Center is partnering with the PD Healthy Homes Division for a Food Drive. Please help us collect non-perishable foods that will be served to families in need within our community. Drop off boxes are located at the Activities Center and at the Rec Center. Items

needed are rice, beans, pasta, pasta sauce, and cereal. The drive will continue to accept donations through July 17.

**Volunteer Reception:** Our annual Volunteer Reception Ceremony will take place on Thursday, April 13 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Carl Levin Park.

**Art in the Park:** Enjoy a beautiful spring day at Art in the Park! Visit Carl Levin Park on Saturday, April 29 from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. for free art activities, art vendors, live music, and more!

**Coffee with a Cop:** PD's Community Services will be hosting a Coffee with a Cop event at Dunkin' Donuts on April 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **Spotlight on Service:**

**Calvin Fleming Praised:** A business wrote to the City and expressed their appreciation for Code Enforcement Officer Calvin Fleming. The letter reads, "I want to give special recognition to Mr. Fleming. He is a gentleman who is dedicated in his job and is always willing to work with those that he meets. His manners and his tremendous source of information goes above and beyond when needed and is always on top of his game when something is required. Thank you, Mr. Fleming, for all that you do."

**Julie Helsham and Ursula Paddie Thanked:** Julie Helsham and Ursula Paddie were thanked by HR Director Leona Clay for their assistance with covering for a Kudos Celebration for Catharina Hoffman. Ms. Clay wrote that their assistance allowed the whole Courts team to participate.

**Wilson Riley is Fantastic:** PD's Sergeant McAfee wrote to thank Wilson Riley for her assistance at a job fair. He stated, "I wanted to let you know that Wilson Riley from HR was fantastic. Her knowledge and positive energy were a huge factor in the day's success. She truly knows and loves her position at HR."

**Sergeant McAfee Appreciated:** HR's Wilson Riley wrote about the good work of Sergeant McAfee at a recent job fair. She stated, "He played a large role in the success as he was able to answer questions about the pd and training required with the positions."

**Shiloh Wester Goes Above and Beyond:** A citizen wrote in to praise Pet Adoptions' Shiloh Wester. The citizen wrote, "Shiloh Wester went out of her way to assist another member of our community in the identification of a lost pet communicating via the Nextdoor social app, "We are happy to send an Animal Services Officer out to scan this pup for a microchip, please call us if you need us to come to you, we are open until 7pm today." Please express my appreciation to Shiloh and the entire Harker Heights Animal Adoption Center for all the great things they do!"

**Judge Billy Ray Hall and Library Director Lisa Youngblood Invest in Others:** A citizen wrote to thank Judge Billy Ray Hall and Library Director Lisa Youngblood. This citizens' child was recently recognized for their performance compared to students nationwide. The citizen stated that their child had, "some very good mentorship through volunteer opportunities with the City, especially Lisa at the Library and Judge Hall with Teen Court."

**Wilson Riley, Annette Hamman, and Chelsea Jennings Help Out:** Finance's Kelsey Coffman thanked HR's Wilson Riley, Finance's Annette Hamman and Chelsea Jennings for assisting with a shred event. She said, "Getting everything moved around and boxed up is a lot of work and I really appreciate how much assistance you three provided. It made my part of the process so much easier! So again, THANK YOU!!"

**Johnny Widener's High Standards:** A citizen wrote to thank Pet Adoption's Johnny Widener. The citizen wrote, "A big thank you to Animal Control Officer Johnny Widener, who, on Thursday, March 9, removed a deer which was entangled on a chain link fence in our back yard. Officer Widener displayed the highest standards in professionalism and compassion throughout the process. We are fortunate indeed to people such as Officer Widener as citizens and employees of Harker Heights. Thank you Harker Heights."

**Chuck Adams Gets it Done:** We received a call from a citizen about the good work of Public Work's Chuck Adams. The citizen had dropped her keys into the storm drain at Sam's. She had two small children and needed help. Chuck came out and was able to retrieve the keys. The citizen called to express her appreciation and give a big thank to you Chuck.

**Finance Director Ayesha Lealiie Thanks Employees for Budget Kickoff Assistance:**

- **Kelsey Coffman:** Kelsey, thank you for bringing your ideas and creativity to the table as well as being the muscle behind the show. These budget kickoffs would not be the same without you.
- **Susan Crawley:** Susan, thank you for jumping in and doing everything you can to make sure that everything goes off without a hitch.
- **Lisa Youngblood:** Lisa, thank you for loaning us additional items for décor making today that much more pirate-y.
- **Gary Bates:** Gary, as always, thanks for being our behind the scenes guy, ensuring that everything runs smoothly.
- **Kristina Ramirez:** Kristina, thank you for staying behind today and helping out even when we insisted that we got it. Your help definitely got us out of there quicker than had it been just us.

**Yvonne Spell Wows:** Councilmember Blomquist complimented the plat presentations in the Council packet which was the good work of Planning's Yvonne Spell.

**Josh Delong Recognized:** HR Director Leona Clay wrote to show her appreciation of IT's Josh Delong for his assistance with a video issue.

**Courtney Fye's Hard Work Acknowledged:** Planning's Yvonne Spell wrote to show her appreciation for the hard work of Courtney Fye. Yvonne stated that Courtney goes beyond her job title in assisting the department and is always looking for ways to improve the

Department. Yvonne states, “She is clearly an integral part of not only our department, but also the City as a whole.”

**Courts Congratulated for 2023 Traffic Award:** HR Director Leona Clay and City Manager David Mitchell congratulated Courts employees Catharina Hoffman, Andrea Contreras, Aaliyah Giadoo, Genelle Rodriguez-Otero, April Edwards, Melissa Chevalier Duenas, and Tracy Zynda for receiving the 2023 Municipal Traffic Award. The award recognizes all Courts does to promote traffic safety. Thank you all for representing our City so well!