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News & Views

February 16, 2022

The City of New Hope's Employee Newsletter



State of the City—Back in Person!

On Feb. 2, Mayor Kathi Hemken and City Manager Kirk McDonald presented on the State of the City. In attendance were members of the New Hope Business Networking Group, city residents, representatives from surrounding cities and city employees.



Highlights for 2021 included the opening of the aquatic park, phase one of the public works expansion project, several business openings and expansions, Redmon's Popcorn/"The Late Show with Stephen Colbert," (pictured) several successful scattered site projects, another banner year for the New Hope Golf Course, several Parks & Rec improvements, infrastructure improvement project in the area around Lions Park, replacement of the railroad tracks crossings at Boone and Winnetka, seven new hires and four promotions in the police department, deployment of body worn cameras by police staff, West Metro's major apparatus replacement, greatly increased social media

following of city accounts, deployment of Ready311, successful In Focus and RAVE! Award contests, and lastly the return of the New Hope Community Farmers Market, National Night Out, City Day and Safety Camp. A very busy year!

Public Works Expansion Project Update

The construction at public works continues, including the central garage lift replacement. The new lift parts were delivered recently, and the concrete has been poured and left to cure for 30 days. The mechanics bay will be painted after the curing period to be followed by the installation of the new lift. Much of the first phase of construction is completed inside the building and just minor items remain. The photo below shows one of the newly created spaces – making

(pictured below—upper storage area with forklift access, right—new equipment lift)



Mark Your Calendar:

- Feb. 21 – Presidents' Day: City Offices Closed
- Feb. 23 – Wacky Wednesday – Jeans
- Mar. 23 – Wacky Wednesday – Jeans
- Mar. 23 – Wellness: Social Media Dos and Don'ts
- Mar. 28 – Apr. 7 – Curbside Clean-up

2022 Projects Planned

As is usual for a year in the city, many projects are planned for 2022. A few highlights include projects still under consideration and those underway: Scattered Site Housing projects, the administration of elections in August and November, the 2022 Street Infrastructure Improvement Project in the Liberty Park Neighborhood, replacement of playground equipment at Hidden Valley Park, replacement of several park signs, golf course clubhouse interior updates, a new Joint Community Policing Partnership, and the administration of a city-wide survey by an outside agency.

Employee of the Quarter

The city received three nominations for the Employee of the Quarter.

Justin Janson, School Resource Officer

Congratulations to Justin on being selected Employee of the Quarter for October-December 2021. He was nominated for his professionalism in working with students at Cooper High School in even the most challenging of situations. His nominator stated that Justin kept a “calm, level tone” during very stressful interactions. Justin joined the police department in 2015 and received a Chief’s Commendation in 2018. He was appointed as a school resource officer effective September of last year.

Nice work, Justin! We know that the staff, students and parents of Cooper appreciate your work.



Employee of the Quarter Nominees

Pat Cunningham, maintenance worker, for assisting the utilities crew when they were short staffed. His nominator highlighted his great attitude and willingness to get the job done.

Police Department Staff, to quote the nominator, “In a time when societal issues are affecting every person associated with policing, the men and women of our department show up with professionalism, compassion and dedication to keeping our city safe from those that would do it harm.”

New Employee

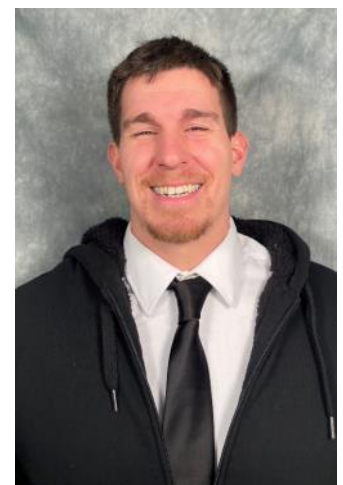
Matthias Waldemar, Community Service Officer

The newest employee to join city staff started on Jan. 24. Matthias was born and raised here in the Twin cities, and his parents, three sisters and one brother still live in the area. His dad works for TSA at Minneapolis-Saint Paul International Airport and his mom works at the Cardinal Bar & Grill. Matthias is the second oldest of the five siblings and he became a proud uncle for the first time recently.

Before joining the city, Matthias spent four years in the Navy, three of those were based in Yokosuka, Japan. During his deployment, he spent time in Australia, Philippines, Malaysia, Hong Kong, Guam and Singapore. He said that he knew after a mission trip to Madagascar when he was 16, followed by a trip to Switzerland, that he wanted to travel the world. The Navy gave him that opportunity and traveling has become a passion for him. In a couple of years, he would like to take an Antarctica/South America cruise so that he can complete his goal of traveling to all seven continents.

When Matthias isn’t traveling, he enjoys exercising and working out. He plays volleyball twice a week on a league year-round. In the winter they use school and community gymnasiums, and in the summer they’re outside in sand courts at local bars. When he can’t play sports, he’s watching the Vikings and the Minnesota United. He greatly enjoys going to Minnesota United games in person as well. He also enjoys taking road trips and hiking the trails in the area and on his travels.

When he’s looking to slow down a bit, you won’t find him in front of a screen but instead with a book in his hands. He will read on a device when traveling, but otherwise he prefers to turn printed pages as he’s reading. His preferred genre is science-fiction and fantasy, with a recent favorite being Robert Jordan’s Wheel of Time series. He’s also a big fan of the Dresden Files, a fantasy/mystery series by Jim Butcher.



(New Employee continued) We're glad to have you with us Matthias. And while we might not be able to match the pace of world traveling, you will certainly have some adventures as a CSO!

Staffing Updates

Matthew Collier, police officer, was appointed as a K-9 officer effective Jan. 27 and he is currently training with his newly assigned K-9, Kaiser. Congratulations, Matthew! And welcome to New Hope, Kaiser!

Police Officer Recruitment – Two police officer candidates are nearing the end of the backgrounding process. If successful, they will start mid-March. The police department anticipates starting a new recruitment process for police officers in March.

Community Service Officer Recruitment – The preferred candidate withdrew, so another candidate has been contacted and is currently undergoing backgrounding.

Police Clerk Recruitment – The preferred candidate is undergoing backgrounding. If successful, they will likely start with the city mid-March.

Nadine Jacobs, Police Officer— Nadine's last day with the city was Feb. 3. Nadine was hired on June 26, 2006. During her time with the city she oversaw the Predatory Offender Registration compliance checks, was an advisor for the Explorers program, and served as a field training officer. In 2008, she participated in the Law Enforcement Academy for Professional Development (L.E.A.D.), a 5-week Leadership Academy. She also served as a rotating investigator for a year and a half, and was a leader at Safety Camp for many years.

Over Nadine's 15 years of service, she received several Chief Commendations and thank you letters from residents and staff of other agencies for her work. The correspondence received by the department thanking her for her work was often due to her ability to bring a calming presence to stressful situations. In 2011, she was nominated for Employee of the Quarter due to her work on a homicide case. We wish Nadine our best as she embarks on the next chapter of her life.



City Manager to Retire

As announced to staff on Feb. 1, Kirk McDonald, city manager, plans to retire as of June 1. Kirk has been with the city since 1990 and city manager since 2007. He has hired a majority of the current employees and any promotions currently in place were his appointments. We are going to miss exchanges such as the one pictured to the left from the 2022 State of the City address with Mayor Hemken. The City Council is working on a transition plan and staff will be kept informed. A full article on Kirk's career will be featured when the time is closer.



Staff Kudos

Terri Matthews, property manager for The Birchway Apartments here in New Hope, took the time earlier this month to write Chief Hoyt to make sure he knew how much New Hope police officers are appreciated. Terri shared, "Your officers showed such compassion and kindness to my residents in these cases. I know they are in all of their interactions with citizens, but the nature of these calls and the remarks by the officers truly reflect on you and how you have made such a positive impact on your officers. THANK YOU!"

As their coworkers, we know what a difference they make, and it's great to hear the community feels the same way. Great work, New Hope PD!



Seasonal Hiring Ramping UP!

Parks and recreation and public works are both starting the hiring process for the summer. There are many positions available for students and adults alike. All active postings for the departments are now posted on newhopemn.gov/jobs. The public works positions are not up yet but will be in the coming weeks.



In Memoriam



Our sympathies to:

- Riley McIlrath, police clerk, for the passing of her dad on Jan. 28.
- Mark Severson, recreation facilities manager, for the passing of his mom on Feb. 4.

Wellness Program

Thank you to those that responded to the wellness survey at the end of last year. It greatly assisted the planning committee with developing the 2022 wellness calendar.

Biometric Screening took place last week. Fifty-five employees participated and are receiving their \$50 gift cards this week!

The tentative calendar for rest of the year is as follows. *If you have ideas or requests for any of the programs, please talk to your department representative on the wellness committee or HR.*

March 23 – Social Media Do's and Don'ts – more information coming soon!

April – Healthy Grilling

May – Gardening Skills

June – Aquatic Park Introduction

July – Workouts for Every Ability: Part II

August – Picnic and Games in the Park

September - Outdoor Passes Program/Vaccination Clinic

October – Public Works Open House and Equipment Rodeo

November – Drug Task Force Briefing

Throughout the year we will be working to offer special ticket purchasing for the Twins, Minnesota State Fair and Renaissance Festival.

