

Table of Contents

Service Recog.	pg. 2
Emp. of the Year	pg. 2
Emp. of the Qtr	pg. 3
Emp. Kudos	pg. 3
Baby News	pg. 3
In Memoriam	pg. 3
Budget Process	pg. 4
Holiday Drives	pg. 4
New Employees	pg. 5
Promotions/Trans.	pg. 6-7
Happenings/Wellness	pg. 8

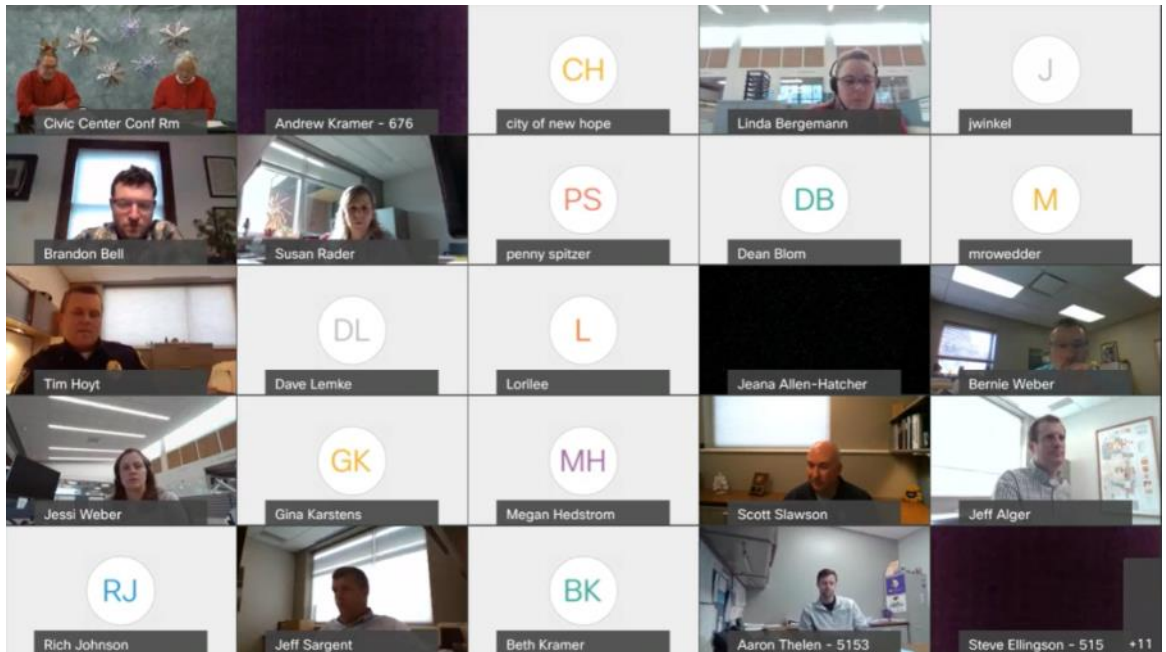
News & Views

December 10, 2020

The City of New Hope's Employee Newsletter

Employee Service Recognition Event

The annual event held in December looked a little different this year. Planning was the responsibility of the administrative departments, city manager and HR/admin. Originally the goal was to simulate the event physically distanced, but we quickly realized that there were too many variables to make it feel like the celebration we enjoy.



So, online we went. The public buildings, except the police station, were closed to the public for one hour over lunch on Thursday, Dec. 3. Kirk McDonald, city manager, and Kathi Hemken, mayor, (*pictured below*) led a virtual meeting thanking all employees for their efforts over the year on behalf of the city and Council, turning it over to the directors to recognize individuals in their departments that had reached five-year milestones during the year and finally to announce and provide accolades to the employee of the year, Aaron Thelen! And in lieu of the traditional hosted event, a surprise announcement was made that all full- and part-time employees would receive a \$25 gift card from Hy-Vee. Almost 50 people were able to attend from their workspaces, conference rooms and remote locations. Service awards

and gift cards were delivered to employees following the event. Thank you to everyone involved with planning and for the many that were able to attend and cheer on our fellow employees during their recognition.



Mark Your Calendar

Dec. 16—Wacky Wednesday

Dec. 24/25—Christmas Eve/Day—City offices closed

Jan. 1—New Years Day—City offices closed

Service Recognition

Congratulations to employees reaching five-year milestones in 2020 (in order of start date). Thank you to Mayor Hemken for representing the Council and members of the management team that were present to recognize each employee for their contributions.

35 years: Scott Crocker, police captain

30 years: Andy Lamers, police officer, and Kirk McDonald, city manager

25 years: Marty Williams, police sergeant

20 years: Shawn Markham, forester/contract manager, and Rich Johnson, HR/admin. director

15 years: Cheri Galli, police investigator

10 years: Andrew Kramer, parks & streets supervisor; Jared Kuyper, police officer; and Scott Stephan, ice arena maintenance operator

5 years: Chris Cazin, police sergeant, and Justin Janson, police officer



Employee of the Year

Aaron Thelen, Recreation Supervisor

(excerpted from the city manager's presentation)

Aaron came aboard as the city's recreation supervisor in August of 2017 and has constantly worked to improve and expand the city's recreational offerings for all ages. He always has a smile and kind word for everyone and is a pleasure to work with.

Aaron was selected as the 2020 Employee of the Year not only for the outstanding job he does every day, but also how he has gone above and beyond this year. When the pandemic threw our world upside down, in addition to his regular duties, Aaron jumped right in...he worked at the ice arena, the golf course and pitched in wherever he was needed. He even continues to pick up trash at Civic Center Park. Aaron also took the lead on developing social distancing and implementing cleaning and sanitizing protocols so modified classes could still be held. When an in-person format wasn't an option, he worked to offer virtual programs. Over the summer he transformed typically indoor programming to outdoor, and has worked with vendors to create activity kits for families to use at home.

At this time, we will present Aaron with the customary tiara as well as a \$200 Visa Gift Card. In the near future, a reporter from the Sun Post will likely be tracking him down for a feature story on being named the 2020 Employee of the Year!

I want to say thank you to Aaron for the outstanding job he does every day! He is always looking for ways to offer exciting programs and events, and does whatever he can to assure participants have a great time!



Employee of the Year Nomination

Gina Karstens, Admin. Specialist for Public Works

(excerpted from the city manager's presentation)

Gina was nominated for the work she does every day. She is always willing to drop what she is doing to help out however she can. She is a great team player and a great addition to the city.



Employee of the Quarter – Third Quarter 2020

Beth Kramer, Communications Coordinator

Beth maintained two jobs during the transition to her new role as communications coordinator. While learning her new duties, Beth provided thorough training to her successor and also assisted with the Primary Election. Both positions are singularly responsible for many duties including the support of other departments, and staff nor external customers saw any interruption of services during the transition or of Beth's positive, enthusiastic attitude. She continually finds innovative ways to accomplish projects and make improvements. Congratulations, Beth, a recognition well-earned!



There were three additional nominees:

Andrea Phinney, accounting technician, for taking on the task of payroll processing to cover for a vacation while continuing to complete her regular responsibilities, as well as several special projects that have been presented.

Katilyn Baker, police officer, for her consistent commitment to go above and beyond by taking on extra duties and roles. She serves as a patrol officer, investigator, explorer advisor, child seat safety technician, field training officer and firearms instructor.

Anthony Larson, community service officer, for assisting the department with annual outdoor firearms training. The two days are long and include equipment loading/unloading, range setup, errands for instructors and many other tasks to ensure the training proceeds efficiently.



Employee Kudos!



Eric Hanson, general inspector, received the following praise from a resident. Thank you to Jeff Sargent, Community Development Director, for passing it on. "Just wanted to pass along the word and appreciate that your residential inspector Eric is doing a fantastic job. I called him today with some home building/project questions and he had the answers I was looking for instantly. Was friendly on the phone, gave me great descriptions of the permit requirements and recommendations for my home project. Was an all-around great experience. I find good work goes unnoticed too frequently, but wanted to pass along my appreciation of the great job Eric did for me."



Baby News

Congratulations to Anthony Larson, community service officer, and his wife Mattilyn on the arrival of their new baby, Eden Rose, born on Oct. 31. Eden is also welcomed home by her big brother, Gary.



In Memoriam



Our sympathies to:

Bruce Stanchfield, maintenance worker, and his family, for the passing of his brother on Oct. 10.

Walker MacBeath, HR coordinator, and his family, for the passing of his brother on Oct. 13.

Kelly Thompson, maintenance worker, and his family, for the passing of his mother on Oct. 29.

Bill Robberstad, central garage supervisor, and his family, for the passing of his wife on Nov. 7.

Gina Karstens, public works admin. specialist, and her family, for the passing of her grandfather on Nov. 19.

2021 Budget Process Almost Completed



The New Hope City Council adopted the 2021 preliminary budget and tax levy at its meeting on Sept. 14 and has been reviewing all department budgets over the last several months.

The preliminary 2021 general fund budget is \$15,936,977, which is an increase of \$526,427 (3.4%) over the 2020 budget.

Major changes in the 2021 budget include:

- \$243,524 increase to fund 3% increase in wages/benefits; increase in Council salaries
- \$156,000 increase for Phase 1 of police department body and squad camera purchases (funded by IT reserve)
- \$85,288 increase for West Metro Fire-Rescue District (\$54,673 for JPA; \$33,265 for new shared emergency generator replacement charge)
- \$57,427 increase in central garage charges based on equipment replacement
- \$49,000 increase in city hall budget due to \$24,000 replacement cost for new generator, increases in utility costs (\$22,000) and liability insurance (\$17,000) for larger building
- \$60,000 decrease in elections budget; 2021 is not an election year

The preliminary total tax levy for the entire 2021 budget, including all funds and debt payments, is \$17,417,601, which is an increase of \$572,885 or 3.4% higher than 2020.

Although the tax levy is increasing by 3.4%, the city's tax capacity has also increased and the estimated tax rate is expected to decrease from 64.72% to 62.47%. The estimated impact to property owners is a 2% increase.

The public hearing to take input from residents took place on Dec. 7 and the Council is scheduled to consider the final budget and tax levy for approval at the Dec. 14 council meeting.

Holiday Drives

Teen Toy Drive (and formally potluck) – Ends This Friday, Dec. 11

While there will not be an in-person potluck this year, the annual drive is underway! All donations will be given to PRISM; who will distribute gifts, or use donated money and gift cards to purchase gifts and give them to families in need. PRISM helps provide more than 1,000 kids each year with school supplies, birthday gifts and holiday toys. PRISM will accept new toys, gift cards (Target preferably) or cash. If you are thinking of suggestions for gifts, the group that is typically overlooked is teenage boys and girls. If you are having a hard time deciding just what to buy, PRISM can do wonders with the gift cards or cash you donate. There is a table set up in the city hall lunchroom. Please drop off your toys and gifts by Friday, Dec. 11. If you have cash or gift cards, please give those to Officer Brad Kallio.



New Hope Police Department Toy Drive – Ends Friday, Dec. 18

New, unwrapped toys for children of all ages will be accepted for the holiday toy drive sponsored by the New Hope Police Department. Items may be dropped off in the city hall and police station lobbies. Donated items will be delivered to NEAR and Toys for Tots, and cash donations support "Shop with a Cop."



Food Pantry Update & Drive – Ends Friday, Dec. 18

Susan Rader, parks and recreation director, provided this update. In November, she delivered \$105 from November's Wacky Wednesday, bringing the year-to-date total to \$690; plus she delivered 274 pounds of food and household goods, bringing the year-to-date total to 732 pounds!

There is still time and need. The Holiday Food Drive goes through Dec. 18 and there is a LOT of city hall hallway yet to be filled!

New Employees

Lee Larson, Police Officer—Oct. 19

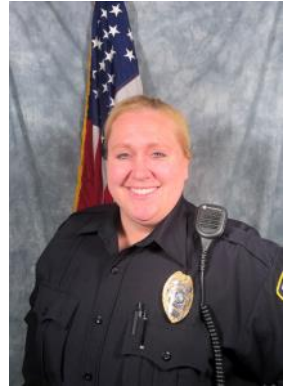
Lee Larson, the newest police officer on the city's beat is no stranger to a new schedule. This last February, she and her husband, Eric, welcomed their first child, Cooper!

Lee spent her childhood growing up in Maple Grove, moving to South Minneapolis as a teenager. She, Eric and Cooper now live in Delano. Lee most recently worked for Hennepin County Sheriff's Office in detention for seven years and as a deputy sheriff for 2 1/2 years. Her dad owned and operated his own construction company for many years and now is inching towards retirement having transitioned to construction consulting. Her mom is with Costco working in marketing, playing a large role when Costco opens new stores in the Twin Cities market.

Lee and Eric are both individuals that enjoy spending time outdoors. They have traveled to Florida, Colorado Springs and Cancun to name just a few destinations. When in the States they will often tent camp. They currently have a list of Minnesota State Parks they want to visit that they are working through. They also enjoy watching sports and enjoying going to Twins' and Vikings' games. After the Twins' 2019 season though, their friends have advised against them going together. Lee and Eric attended six games together and the Twins lost each one. When they went separately to two other games with friends, the Twins WON!

As we mentioned earlier, Cooper has switched up their schedule a bit, but they're still spending as much time active and outside as possible. Lee has a love of water that she's shared with Eric and they've spared no time getting Cooper in the water as well and swim weekly as a family. Lee and Eric also love to sing karaoke. She claims they're both AWFUL singers but there's something about the rush when belting songs out. Eric's a big fan of singing Johnny Cash and Lee loves anything Doo Wop. When asked about things her coworkers might be surprised to learn, Lee shared that she has a large collection of hotel key cards that she started acquiring from places she stayed when a college student. She makes notes of where they're from directly on the keys and keeps them as reminder of fond memories.

Lee said that she's so happy to be at New Hope. She said that so many coworkers have made offers to help with anything she needs and she's very grateful to be a part of the city. We're glad you're here too, Lee! Welcome!



Riley McIlrath, Police Clerk—Nov. 9

Riley McIlrath is the city's newest police clerk. If you've not had a chance to meet her, you'll find her working overnights!

Riley is originally from Brooklyn Center but now lives in Hopkins. Over the last several years, she's held a few positions gaining expertise in fraud detection, customer service and communications. This experience leaves her well-suited for a job in the police department, especially combined with her interest in criminal justice and law. An interest that grew as she watched people she knew be aided through life experiences by law enforcement personnel.

Her mother lives in Blaine and has spent many years working in dental offices. Her dad lives in New Jersey where he works for a golf course, being a trained machinist and horticulturist. She gets a chuckle when she thinks of what he says is his favorite flower, grass! Riley loves to be outdoors doing anything including hiking, biking, swimming and walking, and especially when accompanied by her German Shepard/lab mix, Jax. Growing up she spent a lot of summers swimming, including at Twin Lake. And she made her first trip to Duluth last year and greatly enjoyed both the beauty and the opportunities to be active in the area. Her family members are golfers but her preferred role when on the course is to drive the cart for them.

When she needs to be inside or is looking for some down time, you'll find her reading fantasy, romance and law(!) books or watching movies such as her favorites, Remember the Titans and Green Mile for enjoyment. Luckily for her, she enjoys watching at home almost as much as at the theatre, given the ongoing theater shutdowns. She is also an avid watcher of UFC and MMA. She enjoys listening to podcasts, including The Joe Rogan Experience, and through interviews he had with UFC and MMA fighters she developed an interest in the sport. She reassured the Jolly Journalist though that she does not have aspirations to "go pro."

Welcome, Riley, we hope that you enjoy your new position!



Promotions



Mike TenEyck, Police Sergeant

Officer Mike TenEyck was promoted to sergeant on Oct. 12. Mike holds a Bachelor of Arts in criminal justice. Mike joined the city in 2008. Since becoming a police officer, Mike has excelled in numerous roles, including field training officer, defensive tactics trainer, use of force trainer, school resource officer, investigator, member of the Northwest Metro Drug Task Force and SWAT team member. Congratulations, Mike!

Tim Hoyt, Police Chief

Sergeant Tim Hoyt was selected for promotion to police chief effective Nov. 9. Tim holds a Master of Arts in criminal justice leadership, a

Bachelor of Arts degree in criminal justice studies and an Associate of Science degree in law enforcement. He joined the NHPD as an officer in 2006 and was promoted to sergeant in 2011. In addition to his “regular” duties as a sergeant, Tim has overseen the field training program since 2012 and the K-9 program since 2014. Prior to joining New Hope, Tim worked with three law enforcement agencies in Wisconsin, beginning in 1995.

Recently, Tim has been instrumental in creating and implementing the community engagement program. Although in its infancy, this program has already developed significant relationships between the community and the city and will continue to do so. Join me in congratulating Tim on his promotion to chief!



Chris Cazin, Police Sergeant

Officer Chris Cazin was promoted to sergeant on Nov. 9. Chris holds an Associate of Arts in law enforcement and a bachelor's in criminal justice. He began his law enforcement career as a part-time police officer for the cities of Hoyt Lakes, Biwabik, Eveleth and Breitung Township in northern Minnesota and went full-time with the Eveleth police department in 2001, where he was later promoted to sergeant. In 2007, he moved to the St. Louis County Sheriff's department and in 2014 joined the New Hope PD.

Chris has served in a variety of roles along the way including DARE, school resource officer, firearms instructor, field training officer and SWAT team leader. Congratulations, Chris!

Transitions

Ben Harty, Police Officer

by Chief Tim Fournier (written prior to his retirement)

I'd like to officially announce the departure of Officer Ben Harty. His last day was Sept. 8, 2020. Officer Harty was hired on Dec. 15, 2008, and quickly became a well-respected member of the department. Having an active duty background with the U.S. Army, his skills translated well to law enforcement. His gregarious personality also served him well with fellow employees and citizens alike. In addition to his patrol activities, Ben was a DARE instructor and a member of the West Metro SWAT Team.

In 2012, he was assigned to the District 287 North Education Center as a school resource officer. For the next three years, he excelled in bridging that all important gap between police and at-risk youth. The school staff often praised Ben for his ability to relate to kids.

Over the course of his career in New Hope, Ben received several Chief Commendations and was nominated for Employee of the Quarter in 2014 and 2016. In 2018, Ben was awarded the department's highest honor, the Medal of Valor, for his actions to stop a violent armed suspect in Crystal. Ben will be missed. We wish him the very best as he embarks on the next chapter of his life.



Tim Fournier, Police Chief

The Sun Post ran an article on Sept. 17, 2020 about Tim's Sept. 30 retirement. And while we don't want to be repetitive, there are some things worth repeating and a few questions closer to the city that the Jolly Journalist asked...

Tim joined the city as a firefighter on Feb. 7, 1987 and worked here until 1990. After working as a police officer in Richfield he returned in September 1993 as a New Hope officer, was promoted to sergeant in June of 1999 and finally to police chief in May 2011. Over the years, he was a colleague, mentor and friend to many within and outside of the department. He helped navigate the department and city through some intense and difficult times. Here is some of what he had to share as he stepped out of a department he had been a part of for 27 years...

Given the chance, would you do things differently? No, I wouldn't change things. Of course there are both wonderful and painful memories associated with this job, but I feel I've had a fulfilling career in which I've pushed myself and when given the opportunity, I've done the same for others.

Do you feel that the career you chose made a difference in how you've lived or made you see the world?

Yes. I considered a career in the private sector years ago, but I'm glad I made this choice. I feel you should always learn from your experiences. I've learned to see the world through other's eyes. I feel I've been able to provide a safer environment for others (citizens, fellow employees) directly through work with the city and for others in my life as all the training and experience certainly made me more alert and aware of my environment and situation. I've certainly become a humbler person through service to the community. And while in law enforcement there is a temptation to see the glass half-empty, it is important you fight to see it half-full.

What do you take pride in? Definitely the new police station and city hall. The desire was to create a work environment the employees would enjoy working in and while it was a long, hard job I feel we were successful. As a leader I always strived to improve things for employees and provide opportunities to fulfill their own career aspirations.

What advice would you share with colleagues? Make sure you have outside interests in life. At some point you will retire or leave the job and you'll need new passions to pursue.

What are your favorite memories? The simple, daily interactions with colleagues when comradery was palpable: roll calls, meals together, team-building outside of work. You are definitely part of a larger family. The friendships I've developed along the way are very important to me and will endure for life.

Do you have anything else you would like to share in closing? I still remember my first day on the job. It truly feels like it was yesterday. I also wish I could have planned a larger retirement celebration with my fellow officers, friends, and family.



That last month went too fast. It would have been nice to have more time with colleagues, both formally and informally over the final weeks. That being said I am grateful for what I had and thankful to have made it to retirement.

~~~Congratulations on a fantastic career, Tim! Thank you for the many positive differences you have made!



## Special Thank You

Captain Slawson served as acting chief for the police department following Tim's retirement. Thank you, Captain, for being the person that the department and management team could rely on during the interim.

## Officer Recruitment Update

Final interviews were held for ten candidates this week and last with the city manager and police chief. Three of the candidates have been notified of their preferred status and have received conditional offers. Over the next few weeks they will undergo backgrounding, as well as physical and psychological evaluations.

## Happenings

### 23rd Annual Crystal/New Hope Golf Tournament & BBQ – Sept. 11

New Hope Golf Course hosted this annual event. The event was modified to allow for physical distancing and was sold out with 76 golfers attending, including seven city employees. The event raised funds for local efforts including \$770 for Safety Camp and \$385.34 for the Crime Prevention Fund. Thank you to Mark Severson and his staff for a job well done!

### Awards of Excellence received from the Minnesota Recreation & Park Assoc.

The first award was in the programming and events category for the New Year's Eve Movie at the Ice Arena. Recreation Supervisor Aaron Thelen worked with New Hope Ice Arena staff to coordinate the date over winter break. Aladdin was shown on a jumbo screen on the north rink while the south rink was open for skating prior to the movie.



The second award was in the sponsorships and partnerships category. The Urban Orchard at Little Acre Park includes 25 fruit trees that were planted along the trail at the park. Aaron Thelen, along with Contract Manager/Forester Shawn Markham, and Streets and Parks Supervisor Andrew Kramer worked with Hennepin County and The Food Group to coordinate. On Oct. 5, 2019, a volunteer tree planting took place. The trees for the orchard were donated by Hennepin County. Over the next few years, the trees will be used for orchard maintenance and harvesting classes and once the trees begin to produce, residents will be able to enjoy the fruit or donate it to The Food Group.

### Virtual Commissioner Bus Tour – September



The annual commissioner bus tour was converted to a virtual event this year. A printed booklet that included a project map and project descriptions was provided to all council members and commissioners. Then the digital version was uploaded to the city website so that any visitors to the city website could enjoy. Kudos to Brandon Bell, Jeff Alger and Beth Kramer for a project cleverly converted and well-executed!

### Open Enrollment Completed – Nov. 17

The annual open enrollment period has come and gone for 2021. We had a 96.6% completion rate. By not participating, employees lose their opportunity to elect flex savings benefits and review important details such as home addresses and beneficiaries. One employee discovered that they had forgotten to update their mailing address from a move almost a full year ago! Thank you for being active participants in your benefits.

---

## Wellness Program

### Vaccination Clinic – Sept. 22 & 23

This year Hy-Vee was again on-site to offer flu, Shingles and Hepatitis B vaccines. 26 individuals participated.

### Take it Outside! – September/October

This new program developed by Hennepin County promoted outdoor physical activities. 23 employees participated in at least three of the four weeks and received \$6 gift cards from New Hope businesses for each week they were active. In addition, the following individuals won the respective larger prizes drawn from all participant names. Penny Spitzer - \$60 Hy-Vee Gift Card; Linda Bergemann - \$50 Fleet Farm Gift Card, and Jeff Alger - \$40 Amazon Gift Card.

### Financial Wellness – Dec. 2

Nineteen individuals took part in this program presented by Thrivet advisors. Topics covered included tax efficiencies, accumulation and employer benefit maximizing. Lunch was cost-shared between the city and attendees.



### 2021 Planning

The wellness committee held their first meeting to discuss the 2021 wellness calendar this week. A survey of the 2020 program will be coming soon. Please participate!