



Your Connection

A Monthly Newsletter for City Employees

Happy New Year!

City Hall 1st Floor Project Takes Shape

Remodels Express Office, Information Desk and Security Offices

City Offices will be closed

January 15–Martin Luther King Day



The soon-to-be-completed First Floor Remodel Project features a citizen Information Desk, Customer Express Service Offices, Security Offices, a new conference room, a Wichita Credit Union ATM, and an elevated wide-screen digital television that displays Channel 7 programs.

The improvement will make City Hall more user-friendly for citizens. Soon, there will be unique programming and message bulletins that will inform citizens where key offices are at City Hall, current events happening within the building and much more. On the other side of the elevator bank will be an interactive building directory that will be ADA accessible. Citizens can find where they want to go by function or department.

Next, Phase Two includes demolition of the old Express Office and the Board Room to make way for new and improved City Council offices and a Board Room. With



Express Service

their new location and their office entrance clearly visible from the City Hall entrance, elected officials will be much more accessible to the public. The new offices should be completed in six to eight months.

The final phase of the first floor remodeling will be to construct a new Board Room in the area currently occupied by the Mayor and Council Offices and the south portion of the old Board Room. The result will be a modernized Board Room located across the hall north of the entrances to the Council Chambers. This room will have multi-media capabilities and the ability to do videotaping and live broadcasting of Council workshops.

The entire project will be complete by the end of 2007. Areas that have been tight will become more spacious, the public will be better served, and City Hall, a 40-year-old building, will be more beautiful.

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Licensing Office is now part of Express Service





Fire Chief Larry Garcia is the longest serving city employee. On June 1 he will have been with the City 50 years. He graduated from high school in the spring of 1953, and the following December became a seventeen-year old Marine Recruit. Having been born and raised in a farming community of less than 1,500 people, joining the Marines was a major culture shock for him. "To be thrown together with several hundred 'MEN,' several of whom had been threatened with jail if they stayed in their communities, was a real treat," he said.

Fresh out of the Marine Corps, he became a Recruit Firefighter, June 1, 1957. He was promoted to Lt., as a Fire Alarm Dispatcher after nearly eight years as a firefighter. He was elevated to the rank of Captain, in charge of the Fire Dispatch Center in 1975 and was temporarily assigned to the City Manager's Office in 1976 to oversee the management of the City's EEO/Affirmative Action Program (such as it was). After three years in the Manager's Office he was transferred back to the fire department to assume the duties of Chief of Training. Subsequently, he was temporarily appointed to the position of Fire Chief in the fall of 1987, and was permanently appointed to Fire Chief in 1989.

He was told that the delay for his permanent appointment was because of the 'extensive consideration given to the merger of Police and Fire.' The plan was to merge both departments into a single organization, staffed by "Public Safety Officers" trained to do both jobs. "I'm still trying to imagine what Dick LaMunyon would have looked like attempting to climb up a 100 ft. aerial ladder!! Needless to say, Chief LaMunyon and I had some difficulty maintaining a straight face, during some of those formal discussions and the merger never occurred. Thank God for little favors!" said Chief Garcia.

Q & A with Fire Chief Larry Garcia

What do you enjoy the most about WFD?

Setting aside the satisfaction that is experienced from the very essence of our daily effort, that is: ***"Helping people, most often, during the most horrific time of their lives."*** I've gained considerable satisfaction from mentoring members of this organization. It's extremely exciting to be able to encourage our members to seek to improve themselves, often simply by determining what they aspire to. It is particularly satisfying if you also have opportunity and the means (influence) to provide opportunities for them to become successful.

What do you enjoy least about WFD?

Not that we are responsible, but the loss of a citizen due to the ravages of fire, or some other disaster is particularly troubling to me and all of our Command Staff. And, then of course having to make decisions that some of our employees may be misplaced in the fire profession; encouraging them to seek employment elsewhere has never ever been very satisfying to me.

If "King" for a day, what would you change about the fire department's budget, operations, and prevention.

I would be quick to initiate the changes necessary (equipment, staffing, and public services) to attain an ISO rating of 1. I'm not aware of a single city in these United States that has a rating of 1.

What are your hobbies and interest?

I like to hunt and fish, but I've not taken the time to do much of that since my appointment to Chief of Department. Perhaps I could say golfing is my hobby, however I've never viewed it that way. I tend to be too competitive, and my game definitely doesn't support a competitive spirit. Suffice it to say, "I'm a Swinger," these days! **SMILES**

How do you spend time away from work?

I've been extremely active these past several years in four organizations . . . my church, the YMCA, the Salvation Army and the International Association of Fire Chiefs. Away from City Hall, it keeps me busy and I love it!

What song makes you sing like no one's listening and dance like no one's watching?

Sing and/or dance?? I can't do either . . .

so I walk my dog instead. The real truth of the matter is that HE walks me! If you're really interested, I like anything by Dave Koz, "Bonney" James, Kirk Whalum, Larry Carlton, and my favorite singers are Barbara Streisand and Mariah Carey.

Is it true that your son who was a firefighter who beat you to retirement?

It is true that my son, Bert, retired with more than 26 years of service with the Wichita Fire Department. But to say he beat me to retirement, there was no competition in that regard. I was eligible for retirement when he joined our ranks! At the time I was working for the City Manager on temporary assignment. Bert and I may have been the first father/son employees in the history of the department.

Not that we want you to leave, but when do you plan to retire? (YC would like to break the news)

Whenever I tell my wife (or in reality, when she tells me), the City Manager will be the next to know. He and I will make the decision as to when and how you and the rest will be advised of our decision.

What do you look forward to when you retire and what do you fear the most when you retire?

I really look forward to being able to do what I want to and when I want to do it. I sometimes wonder if that is reality, simply a "pipe dream." I'm certainly not fearful of retirement . . . it simply is a matter of turning the page on another chapter of my life. Our Creator has extended an abundance of grace upon my family and me over the years. I don't believe HE will be any less gracious once I'm retired. Who knows what the future holds for any of us? I'm looking forward to retirement, whenever it comes!!

Throughout your career who has been your biggest influence or mentor?

Professionally, I would have to say former City Manager Chris Cherches had a considerable influence on me. Be mindful of the fact that I worked for him nearly 20 years in one capacity or another.

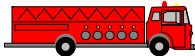
What are your "pet peeves"?

Broken shoe laces. **SMILES**. And the recurring question: "When are you going to retire." **SMILES**.

Fire Department

Fire Prevention Achieves Holiday Inspection Goal

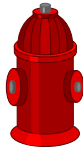
Immediately after Thanksgiving Fire Prevention set an inspection goal to have most or all of the major retail stores in the City of Wichita inspected by Jan. 1, 2007. The reason for the inspections was to insure safety for holiday shoppers during the hectic shopping season. On Dec. 20, with six working days to spare, the division accomplished its goal after inspecting over 600 retail stores. Although numerous violations were found and merchants were cited for the infractions, there were no major violations during this particular inspection time. Violation re-checks will be made on all merchants cited.



New Fire Engines

The department recently received 10 new fire engines. The new engines will be used to replace some

of the older fleet. In addition to the 10 new ones, the department will also be receiving 5 more. Some of the additional engines will be housed in the proposed new fire stations. The average cost of a fire engine is \$500,000.



Where There's A Hydrant, There's Water

You may have seen them as you drove past a fire hydrant in the city, firefighters with spanner wrenches, hose and a clip board recording information as water flowed from the hydrant. Well, rest assured 99.9 percent of all hydrants in the city flow water. The department tested over 11,500 hydrants within a three-month period.

Enter Fire Department Miles Driven Contest And Win A Prize

Have you ever wondered how many total

odometer miles the Fire Department's emergency vehicles are driven each year? Beginning Monday, Jan. 8, 2007 and ending Wednesday, Jan. 31, 2007 you can enter the Miles Driven contest by submitting your entry by e-mail to: RThompson@Wichita.gov. Those who do not have an e-mail account may fill out an entry form in the Fire Prevention office and drop it in the entry box at the front desk. All Fire Department personnel, their families, vehicle maintenance personnel and their families and all others who may have data access to the miles are not eligible to enter the contest. Prize will be delivered to the winner.



Environmental Services



Mayor Mayans at Earhart Environmental Magnet School

On December 7th, Mayor Carlos Mayans joined Cities United for Science Progress (CUSP), a partnership between the U.S. Conference of Mayors (USCM) and DuPont, at Colvin Elementary and Earhart Environmental Magnet Schools for a *Science in the School Day*. The event was coordinated by Charles Small (WestinReinhart), Kay Johnson (Dept. of Environmental Services), and WATER Center staff, Libby Albers and Kay Drennen. The

DuPont field engineers Andrea Pomarico and Sarah Warren jumpstarted the day's activities with a fun, hands-on project exploring basic engineering principles. Mayor Mayans led the students as they built the water filter using everyday materials like cotton balls, rags, paper towels, sand and cooking oil. The Mayor closed the program by challenging the students to pursue careers in math and science and to help protect water quality by preventing pollution.

Building Services

Please Use Revolving Doors in Atrium!

In the remodeling of the Atrium, the old power sliding door was replaced with a revolving door between the Atrium and Parking Garage to keep the cold air from entering the Atrium. The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that a swinging door be provided for entrance to City Hall. A power assist

button is there to make using that door easier for the physically challenged. It holds the door open for 20 seconds so that a wheelchair can pass safely.

If you use the handles, it closes quickly. However, if the button is pushed to activate the powered ADA feature of the door, it leaves the door open long after the person has passed through. This allows large quantities of cold air to come rushing into the Atrium, freezing the security guards and members of the public waiting in line. Plus, it is a drain on energy trying to keep the Atrium warm during winter.

There are times to use this button feature: when carrying a large quantity of materials, pushing a cart, or if you have physical disabilities. Most of the

time, please use the revolving door or the swinging door without pressing the power button. In winter, it is the courteous thing to do.



Frontline Feature: Margo Parks



Margo Parks works for the City of Wichita as the Customer Service/Information Assistant and is one of the City's bilingual resources. She says on average, she helps 15 Spanish-speaking citizens a day.

Margo said "Disfruto mi trabajo, especialmente ayudando a la gente!" Translation: "I enjoy my job, especially helping people!"

She has worked for the City since the day she came to Wichita in March of 1970.

Margo comes from Alliance, Nebraska where she was born. She comes from a large family which includes nine sisters and six brothers.

Her family is very close and gets together two or three times a year. She learned her people skills from belonging to a large family: "you either get along and contribute as a team member to the family or you struggle by being told what to do instead of selecting what you want to do." Margo has one son, Jeremy Parks, one daughter-in-law, Nikki and a grandson, Blaise Raymond Parks.

She says her job with the City is very enjoyable and very rewarding because of the all the people with whom she works and makes contact. She served in the position of City Manager's Secretary to three City Managers: Ralph Wulz, Gene Denton and Chris Cherches. She learned different techniques of how to handle various matters from all three City Managers and enjoyed the knowledge

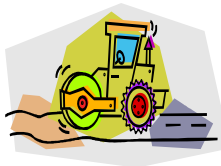
gained from them.

Margo now serves in the position of Customer Service/Information Assistant and is located on the first floor of City Hall.

Margo is very involved in the community serving in the following organizations: Hispanic Chamber of Commerce; La Mesa Redonda; Hispanic Women's Network; National Latino Peace Officer's Association; Secretary of the GI Forum Board; Vice President of the La Familia Senior/Community Center; member of the Wichita Area Sister Cities; and serves on many different committees.

She still finds time to do things she enjoys such as spending time with her new grandson, traveling, dancing, going to movies, vacationing with her family and so many other things. She is always busy but seems to have the energy

Public Works

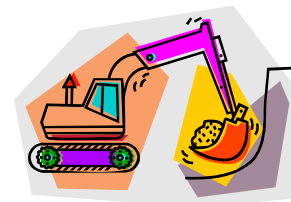


2006 Projects Add Up

In 2006, Public Works Engineering staff awarded contracts for 243 pavement, sewer, water, storm drain and maintenance projects, totaling \$102.4 million worth of work. This includes \$30 million worth of infrastructure for new subdivi-

sions, \$15 million for new and replaced sanitary sewer mains, \$4.3 million for new and replaced major water mains, and \$1 million in park projects. The balance was for KDOT paving projects (\$33 million), CIP pavement (\$8 million), contracted street maintenance (\$5.5 million), infrastructure in existing neighborhoods (\$2.7 million), sidewalk/utility cut repair/wheelchair ramps (\$2 million), and KDOT bridge/freeway projects (\$1.5 million).

These projects will also be inspected and administered by PW Engineering staff in the coming months.



City Arts

January Events

Jan. 4 - 31: ProAm Photography Exhibit

The ProAm Photography Exhibit is a biennial photo show hosted by CityArts and Lawrence Photo. Professional and amateur photographers are invited to enter up to two pieces of their work. All photographic methods are invited; from pinhole cameras, to 35 mm, to digital, and from darkroom to computer manipulated. CityArts will have half the entries hanging in the gallery, and the other half of the entries will be displayed at Lawrence Photo at 401 East Douglas.

Reception: Final Friday, January 26, 6-8pm

Jan. 3 - 31: Charlotte Martin - Second Floor Conference Room

Artist and staff member Charlotte Martin kicks off the year with the addition of another gallery space. The second floor Conference Room will now house monthly exhibits. All work will be for sale.

Jan. 4 - 31: Southeast High School - Photography - Second Floor Gallery

The photography students of Ken Enquist, art teacher at Southeast, will have their work on display during the month of January.

Jan. 17 - Bach's Lunch and Senior Wednesday

Free noon concert open to the public. Guest musicians are: Soulstice, A jazz combo from Friends University.

The **winter session** will begin **Monday, January 8, 2007**. You can check out classes offered this session on our website www.wichitaarts.com. Call CityArts at 462-2787 to register now!

Human Resources

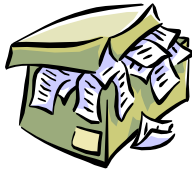


Have you moved recently?

Remember that you need to notify Human Resources of your new address to ensure that your Tax information is up to date. Also, all of your insurance carriers need to be notified of a change of address.

Flexible Spending Deadlines

You have until March 2007 to submit your receipts for any expenses incurred in 2006. After that any money left in the Flexible



Spending accounts will be forfeited. If you need some extra deductions, IRS publications 502 and 503 outline the expenses that the IRS commonly allows. Links to these documents as well as many other helpful hints can be found at the ASI website.

www.asiflex.com

NEW INSURANCE ID CARDS!

Look for new Coventry

Insurance Cards in the mail. These cards will replace your old cards. Present the new card at your Medical professional's office the next time you visit to ensure that they have the correct information on file. The group numbers and your toll-free customer service numbers are changing.

Wellness

Watch for upcoming details of the City of Wichita's Wellness program. City Council has approved a contract with WellnessCoachesUSA to become the City's wellness

provider. Coaches will be interacting one on one with employees to help increase everyone's overall health. Biometric measurements, ergonomic advice, and personal motivation will be some of the tools employed by the coaches.



Christmas with OCI

Lee Grandstaff, Plumbing Inspector for OCI, spends most days inspecting new plumbing installations on construction sites. Through the course of one day last December, he heard about a young mother, Stephanie, who had just been released from a long stay in the hospital after undergoing surgery to remove a tumor. Stephanie was feeling frantic about how she would provide Christmas presents for her five young children since she had been off work for the previous month because of her illness. Although her employer was understanding about her circumstances, Stephanie had just started a new job when she found out about the tumor and wasn't eligible for paid sick leave. With her husband serving time in a correctional boot camp, Stephanie was facing the prospect of a very bleak holiday for her children. When she tried to explain to the two oldest children that money was too tight to spend on presents, the oldest child assured her that she needn't worry. After all, Santa Claus would handle the gifts; that was his job.

As it turned out, that young man knew exactly what he was talking about. The Friday evening before Christmas, Santa and Mrs. Claus arrived at Stephanie's home with a huge red bag, filled with presents for the children. Following Mr. and Mrs. Claus was an entourage of clowns carrying boxes of still more presents and plenty of groceries to last beyond the holiday dinner.

Lee Grandstaff and his wife, Pat, become Santa and Mrs. Claus every year in December, volunteering for a number of organizations that work with children. Lee and Pat have a full schedule through December with their regular appearances as well as the extra stops that they make to the homes of families who need a visit from Santa. They have refused payment, insisting that they probably "have more fun than anyone!" when they see the excited smiles of the children.



Library



**READ
OUTSIDE
THE BOX**

Read Outside the Box Fourth Annual Adult Winter Reading Program

Read books. Win prizes! Is it really that simple? To challenge you to read outside the box, the Wichita Public Library's fourth Annual Adult Winter Reading Program rewards participants ages 16 and over for reading six books in at least three different genres: horror, memoir, mystery, romance, science fiction and western. For each book read, you may enter monthly drawings for prizes; the grand prize drawing will be held

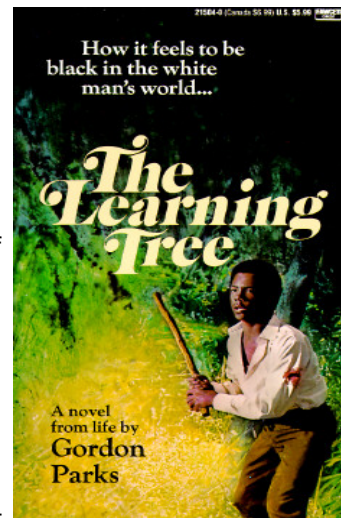
in April during National Library Week. For complete rules, entry forms and reading ideas, visit the Library's in-depth [Read Outside the Box website](#) or pick up an entry form from any Library location.

Getting the whole group involved? Contact Jennifer Heinicke (261-8524) or Julie Linneman (261-8590) to receive brochures and a poster for your workgroup or department.

One Book Kansas: *The Learning Tree*

The Wichita Public Library joins with libraries, booksellers and others across the state in encouraging all adults to read Gordon Parks' *The Learning*

Tree between Jan. 29 (Kansas Day) and Apr. 30. One Book Kansas is sponsored by the Kansas Center for the Book at the State Library and aims to open a dialogue between Kansans as they read, discuss and experience the same book. As part of the Library's series of films, book discussions and talks, David Parks will be visiting Wichita on Wednesday, Jan. 31. David Parks, Gordon Parks' son, has said, "*The Learning Tree* is the most important book that my father wrote because it was a stepping stone for him personally and professionally. It allowed him to write about the experiences he lived growing up in Kansas in the 1920s and it led to his directorial debut as a filmmaker." Watch the Wichita



Public Library's website, <http://www.wichita.lib.ks.us>, for more details about Mr. Parks' visit.

Transforming Wichita at the Neighborhood City Halls

It was a cold and rainy day, five days before Christmas, when a family in Planeview called the Colvin Neighborhood City Hall asking for help. As frequent volunteers and visitors at the Neighborhood City Hall, the family came this time asking for assistance, and they weren't to be disappointed!

The mother in the family had unwittingly pulled into her usual parking place. What she didn't know was that a City contractor had been working on the water line, and she was in for an unpleasant surprise. Between the construction and the steady rain, her car sank in the mire up to its axles.

After hearing her story, and

then taking a first-hand look at the vehicle, Colvin staff e-mailed a plea for help to various City Departments. When they did not get a response, they started to worry that their plea had gone unheard. But within the hour, the car owner called and said that her vehicle had been rescued, and was safe and sound on dry land. She repeatedly thanked the Colvin staff and reiterated how fortunate she is to live in Wichita.

Colvin staff sent an immediate thank you to all of the original e-mail recipients acknowledging this anonymous benefactor. It was then they learned that the help they sought had come from the City of Wichita Water

Utilities heroes!

Upon receiving the e-mail, Director Dave Warren and Assistant Director Don Kirkland, had immediately dispatched City Water employee Greg Lolley to assess the situation.

Greg determined that the site where the car was sunk was indeed a City project and he contacted the contractor, who in turn made immediate arrangements to get the stuck vehicle out of the mud. Additionally, Greg and the contractor identified locations that needed to be barricaded off until the area dried sufficiently, and other areas that needed stabilization and thus prevent any more unpleasant surprises.



This family did not have the resources to resolve this problem, which was not of their own making. When made aware of the situation, City staff took prompt and appropriate action. As Don Kirkland said, "*This is Transforming Wichita at its best.*"

City Manager's Office

The City of Wichita in partnership with the Central Plains Area Agency of Aging and Sedgwick County are offering seniors the opportunity to have smoke detectors with a 10-year lithium battery installed in their home absolutely free. In order to prevent fire and keep our seniors safe we have volunteers that are ready to educate seniors on the potential fire hazards in their homes and to provide them with adequate smoke alarm coverage by installing them. Smoke alarms are only available with installation. To qualify seniors must be 65 or older, reside in Wichita, own their home or live with the homeowner. To sign up please stop by your area Neighborhood City Hall to pick up the application or call Neola at 660-5128.

Planning

10th FLOOR REMODEL

The remodeling project of the “public spaces” within the Planning Department has started. These are the areas that are used to serve the customers of the Planning Department. The general contractor is Walz Harman Huffman Construction; they are same construction company that is also currently working on the 1st floor project.

Phase I is currently underway and includes the reception area; director’s conference room; “map room” that Current Plans staff uses to serve their customers; and workstations for

Administration staff. This phase is scheduled for completion by mid-March. Phase II will include remodeling of the elevator lobby area; large conference room in the northwest corner that is used for public hearings of various boards, including the Metropolitan Area Planning Commission; construction of an ante-room adjacent to the large conference room; and converting part of the north hallway into a storage area. Phase II is scheduled for completion by mid-May.

During Phase I of the remodel project, the entrance to the Planning Department will be

through the hallway door in the southwest corner of the 10th floor.



Water Utilities

Aquifer Recharge Project Treatment Plant Wins Award

The Associated General Contractors of Kansas (AGC) has given the Award of Excellence to the Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project Water Treatment Plant. The seven million gallon-per-day water treatment plant was constructed as part of Phase I of the Aquifer Storage and Recovery Project. The ASR plant is the first water plant in Kansas to use ballasted

flocculation treatment and was built using the design/build approach because of a very limited construction schedule. This plant is used to treat surface water captured from the Little Arkansas River, prior to discharging it into recharge basins.

The decision to use water directly from the Little Arkansas River and to build a treatment plant was made in October of 2005, with the expectation that it would be operational in time

to take advantage of anticipated fall runoff events in September of 2006, less than eleven months after conception of the project. The contract with the design/build team of CAS Construction and CDM Engineering was approved by the City Council in January 2006 and construction began on March 1st. The plant became operational on September 1st, 2006, three weeks ahead of the completion date. The

project involved extensive efforts by the City, the contractor and engineers, as well as suppliers, in order to meet the extremely aggressive construction schedule. The award will be presented during the AGC Awards Luncheon at the Hyatt Hotel on February 2nd. David Warren, Director of Wichita Water Utilities, and Jerry Blain, Project Manager for the ASR Project, will accept the award on behalf of the City.



For the Record

RETIREES

<u>RETIREES</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>YEARS OF SERVICE</u>
Lucille I. Holder	Library	30 years

RETIREE DEATHS

<u>RETIREE DEATHS</u>	<u>DEPARTMENT</u>	<u>DATE OF DEATH</u>
Juanita F. Schaffer, widow of Francis J. Schaffer	Central Inspection	12/14/2006
Wanda Wallweber, widow of Raymond Wallweber	Public Works	12/18/2006
Marvin H. Ellis	Central Inspection	12/22/2006
Elbert E. Ware	Human Services	12/27/2006
William C. Johnson	Police	01/04/2007
Ruth Bulla, widow of F. E. Bulla	Police	01/05/2007
Russell G. Hildreth	Fire	12/16/2006

Citizen Police Academy graduates 30 citizens

Thirty Wichitans are the most recent graduates of the Wichita Police and Sedgwick County Sheriff's Office Citizen Police Academy. The class, which finished the 13-week curriculum on Nov. 14, heard commencement remarks from Chief Norman Williams and Sheriff Gary Steed.

"The Academy is a good example of how citizens can work together with the Department to support law enforcement and open positive lines of communication within the community," said Chief Williams.



Your Connection Representatives

Debbie Aviks	CMO
Dana Brown	CMO
Terri Dozal	CMO
Vallery Fields	Transit
Larry Foos	Parks & Recreation
Elaine Hammons	OCI
Mike Hampel	Planning
Jennifer Heinicke	Library
Kay Hurdle	Law
Stacy Jenkins	City Arts
Jessica Johnson	CMO
Pamaline King-Burns	Water Utilities
Deb Legge	OCI
Denise Klug	IT/IS
Kristine McMinnville	Water Utilities
Michelle Rucker	Housing & Community Services
Marge Seger	Finance
Mo Terrebonne	Environmental Services
Bob Thompson	Fire
Denise Tipton	Water Utilities
Van Williams	CMO
Gail Williams	Public Works
Valerie Wise	Airport