

Pride in Public Service

Many positive things have happened with employees over the past month.

Police Officer Ian Benner has completed his training program, providing much needed staffing relief in the department. Congratulations to Nick Castaneda for his promotion to Sergeant, Jaime Licea for his promotion to Parks Superintendent and Tina Lindenberg-Kirchner for her promotion to Administrative Services Manager.

Employee Recognition

A group of employee volunteers recently developed an employee recognition program. The program was designed to provide opportunities for citizens, supervisors and peers to recognize employees for individual and team achievements in areas such as customer service, leadership, public relations, innovation and excellence. 2012 marks the first year awards were distributed. This year's nominees included: Jonathan Jimenez (nominated by a citizen!), Scott Ward, Valerie Macor, Ruben Mandujano, Selena Osborn; and congratulations to Employee Recognition Award recipients Tina Lindenberg and Shawn Sumpter.

In addition to the above mentioned formal recognition program, the Management Team opted to recognize three employees who consistently demonstrated excellence, leadership and initiative: Todd Woolman, Debra Nelson and Selena Osborn. Kudos!

October 27th Downtown Events

If you were downtown on Saturday morning you likely experienced a lot of frustration. Several events were scheduled with overlapping time frames – the farmers' market pumpkin festival, howl-o-ween parade, haunted house and a marathon. There is no question that parking was significantly impacted (and insufficient). Roads were blocked, traffic was gnarled and tempers were frayed. Many residents have called and emailed City Hall to express concern that there is a lack of balance between the needs of residents and visitors. A few people just griped about all of the events. On the other hand, we did hear several positive comments from business owners. Visitors were shopping, dining and lodging in Healdsburg.

What staff learned is this: we need to have a more global view of events and their impacts and we need a much tighter process for approval. We will be working over the next few weeks to improve both.

Community Coalition Meeting

Allow me to extend an open invitation to attend the Community Coalition meetings held the first Thursday of every month at Foss Creek Community Center at 8 a.m. The purpose of the meetings is to provide a forum for representatives from the City, Chamber of Commerce, schools businesses and residents to exchange information and ideas. This is a very informal and interactive setting. Please join us!

Partnership With Sonoma County Energy Independence Program

The Sonoma County Energy Independence Program (SCEIP) gave a presentation to the City Council regarding residential energy audits and other energy efficiency programs available to customers of the

City's electric utility. The Energy Audits are free and most participants will find ways to reduce their energy bills at little or no cost. If you or someone you know is interested in obtaining an energy audit please call the City's energy hotline at (707) 431-3122. Visit SCEIP's website at <http://www.sonomacountyenergy.org/>

Foss Creek Circle

We are getting a lot of feedback about the conversion of Foss Creek Circle to a one-way street. It appears to be counter-intuitive to have the one-way travel go from south to north. Nevertheless, this is the direction that enables us to meet the needs of all business operators. The only challenge remaining is public education. Additional signage has been placed on the street and will remain in place while people become accustomed to the change. You may also see additional traffic enforcement by the police department.

Miscellaneous Projects

Construction on the Burgundy Slide repairs is underway. All dry utilities have been relocated and the temporary water put back into service as a precaution during excavation of the south portion of the roadway. Earthwork is expected to continue for the next three-four weeks and then reconstruction of the private driveways and Burgundy will take place. Work is scheduled to be completed in mid to late December.

Subsurface geologic drilling was conducted at the Healdsburg Avenue Bridge to provide design criteria for the new center piers. Caltrans performed fracture critical inspections in August and a summary of their findings indicates that there are no cracks or fractures identified. Our structural engineer was able to participate in the inspection and will use the information gathered while preparing the plans for rehabilitation of the bridge structure. Final environmental documents are anticipated in December.

Construction of Phase I of the underground utilities for the Downtown Streetscape is completed with the exception of the punch list items. Staff is working with the contractor to complete these items and close-out the project. A recommendation for acceptance and issuance of a notice of completion will be presented to Council once the final issues have been completed.

Parks Department personnel have been working closely with Davey Tree to prune the palm trees at the south end of town on Healdsburg Avenue. The palms on Healdsburg Avenue should be aesthetically similar to the palms at the Healdsburg Plaza.

Marjie Pettus is the Healdsburg City Manager. To submit ideas or questions for this column, email cityscape@ci.healdsburg.ca.us.