Mission’s Governing Body and Leadership Team participated in an all day goal setting retreat on February 8. We reviewed current goals and objectives and discussed others that might be of importance in the year ahead. Beginning in March 2020, the City Administrator will provide a quarterly update on the status of various projects and priorities at the City Council Committee meeting, with supporting documentation in the packet.

“Shout Out” to Mission’s Sustainability Commission

During a recent update to the City Council, members of the Commission reported that during their recent holiday light recycling campaign, 937 pounds of lights were collected and successfully recycled. That’s equivalent to the weight of a male polar bear! This dedicated group of volunteers is always looking for creative ways to promote sustainability.

Upcoming Infrastructure Presentations

Several members of Mission’s staff and Council heard a presentation at a recent First Suburbs Coalition meeting which they felt was very informative. The Coalition hosted Dennis Straight, Managing Principal with Gould Evans, who delivered a presentation entitled “Unlocking the Unseen Potential of Kansas City” and explored the impact of high infrastructure costs on municipal services. The work he presented focused on Kansas City, Missouri, but those from Mission in attendance felt the presentation had resonance for Mission, as well.

Mr. Straight will be presenting a similar version of the talk at the Plaza branch of the Kansas City Public Library on Tuesday, March 3:

We’ve Built Cities We Can’t Afford

There is another related presentation on Tuesday, March 31 at the Plaza Branch:

Data Driven Growth: What KC Can Learn from Memphis

February is Heart Health Month, the perfect time to learn about your risk for heart disease and the steps you need to take now to help your heart. Heart disease—and the conditions that lead to it—can happen at any age. For more information on steps you can take to protect yourself or your loved ones, please visit the Center for Disease Control’s website at:

cdc.gov/features/heartmonth
Effective February 10, the Mission Hy-Vee will no longer be open 24 hours a day. The store will be closed to the public from midnight to 5 a.m. each day. This change impacted not only the Mission store, but other Hy-Vee locations throughout the metro area.

Healthy Pot Luck

This past week, twelve staff members participated in a “Healthy Potluck” as part of the City’s 2020 wellness program.

Some of the recipes featured were Southwest Quinoa Salad, Slow Cooker Green Beans, Ham and Potatoes, Shredded Buffalo Chicken, Chicken Avocado Salad Roll-Ups, Heart-Shaped Veggie Pizzas, and Creamless Creamy Herb Dip made from cashews. Recipes (like the one included below) were shared with the participants and are available to all.

Creamless Creamy Herb Dressing or Dip
Serves 16 (Makes 2 cups)

1 cup raw cashews
3/4 cup water (more or less depending on dressing or dip)
3 T cider vinegar
1 1/4 t salt
1 t onion powder
1/2 t sugar
1/4 t garlic powder
2 T minced fresh chives
1 T minced fresh parsley
1/2 t pepper

Process cashews in blender on low speed to consistency of fine gravel mixed with sand, 10 to 15 seconds. Add water, vinegar, salt, onion powder, sugar, and garlic powder and process on low speed until combined, about 5 seconds. Let mixture sit for 15 minutes. Process on low speed until all ingredients are well blended, about 1 minute. Scrape down blender jar. Process on high speed until dressing is smooth and creamy, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer dressing to bowl. Cover and refrigerate until cold, about 45 minutes. Stir in chives, parsley, and pepper. Thin with extra water, adding 1 tablespoon at a time, if desired. Dressing can be refrigerated for up to 1 week.

Local representatives from cities, counties and school districts are encouraged to attend this event. The presentation will focus on the role of green infrastructure in creating resilient communities, and costs and benefits of green infrastructure and logistics for advancing implementation.

This free workshop will create the opportunity for an exchange between municipal staff leadership and elected officials to hear from one another about community engagement, environmental impact, growing green jobs and entrepreneurs and alternatives delivery.

Please remember to mark your calendars for our 2020 Service Recognition event. This is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the contributions of all of the volunteers who dedicate countless hours to the City’s various Boards and Commissions. Formal invitations will follow, but details are highlighted below:

Thursday, April 2, 2020
Milburn Country Club
6 p.m.—8:30 p.m.
Weekly Top 5

- The Parks and Recreation Department will be conducting interviews for the Aquatic Facility Manager’s position next week.

- The League of Kansas Municipalities is sponsoring a Governing Body Institute (GBI) workshop April 24-25 in Manhattan, Kansas. Anyone on the Council who is interested in attending should contact Martha Sumrall.

- The auditors will be on-site for their annual field visit next week. Debbie Long, Joanna Marin and Brian Scott have been putting in extra hours to prepare for the visit. We will look forward to presenting the CAFR and the results of the audit at an upcoming Committee meeting later this spring.

- Next week the Technical Committee for the UCS Countywide Housing Inventory will have its first meeting. Laura has been invited to continue to participate in the process. RDG, the consultants selected for the study will also be conducting driving tours of the NE portion of the County, including Mission, next Friday to get a first-hand look at existing housing conditions and to help understand the unique qualities of each city.

- The audit of the former Northeast Animal Control Commission (NEACC) is finally complete and staff has been working to reconcile the distribution of the remaining assets among the participating communities. We have targeted a meeting before the end of the month to share the results with the former members, along with anticipated contractual rates for animal control services for 2020 and 2021.

Mohawk Park Listening Session

Despite “deep freeze” temperatures, nearly 50 residents and neighbors turned out on February 13 for the first public listening session on the conceptual planning process for Mohawk Park.

The consultant team and staff presented the work done to date, stemming from recommendations included in the 2015 Parks Master Plan. Installation of restroom facilities is budgeted for 2020, but it is important to develop a long term plan for the improvements made in the park in order to ensure that investment is made appropriately.

Following the formal presentation, participants were invited to provide feedback on the concepts presented, including having the opportunity to present additional amenities or features they might like to see included in the park. A second public input session is scheduled for March 17.

The Mayor and several members of the Council attended as well, along with members of Mission’s Parks, Recreation and Tree Commission. We look forward to the continued interest in the development of this important asset for our community.

This process will eventually be replicated for each of the City’s parks to help successfully build out the long term plan and strategy for ongoing public investment and improvements. Watch the website and social media for updates on future meetings and conversations surrounding our outdoor parks.

Last month we introduced a new employee service recognition program for full-time staff. We didn’t want you to think we weren’t keeping up, but we had no employees with February hire dates. We’ll be back in March!

Caught in the Act

Assistant to the City Administrator Emily Randel recently passed along kudos for the work done by Aaron Cherry (Facilities and Maintenance Supervisor, Parks and Recreation) and Jeff Mull (Crewleader, Public Works) in collecting and organizing the data needed to begin the process of conducting energy audits at the Community Center and Public Works facility. This was a project priority established by the City Council, and there was a tremendous amount of data that had to be compiled regarding mechanical systems within each facility. While maybe not something clearly defined within their existing job descriptions, both Aaron and Jeff went “above and beyond” to ensure the data we will provide to the state was comprehensive and accurate. What a great example of teamwork. Thanks to all! We will look forward to learning what opportunities we have to realize energy efficiencies and/or savings in the future. Keep an eye out for future project updates.
Random Acts of Kindness Week

Did you know that February 16 - 23, 2020 is “Random Acts of Kindness Week? This is an opportunity to find ways to “pay it forward,” and to help make our community, and the rest of the world a better place.

We’ll be promoting this via our social media next week, encouraging residents and visitors to think about subtle ways they can have a positive influence on others.

“Kindness is the language which the deaf can hear and the blind can see.”
~ Mark Twain

Representative Sharice Davids will host a roundtable discussion on infrastructure and climate change. It will focus on how infrastructure can mitigate the affects of climate change and address our growing climate crisis.

Confirmed panelists include:

- Ashok Gupta, Natural Resources Defense Council
- Jennifer Gunby, U.S. Green Building Council
- Dorothy Barnett, Climate and Energy Project
- Professor Dave Darwin, Chair of Civil, Environmental, and Architectural Engineering at the University of Kansas
- Professor Elaina J. Sutley, Chair’s Council Assistant Professor of Civil, Environmental, and Architectural Engineering at the University of Kansas

The event is free and open to the public and registration is available on-line.

Wed, February 19, 2020
11:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Johnson County Community College
12345 College Blvd
Hudson Auditorium , Room NMOCA 217
Overland Park, KS 66210

I-Codes Updates—2018 Version

Since last fall, staff has been working on the process of preparing to recommend updates to the I-Codes. The I-Codes, developed by the International Code Council (ICC), are a family of coordinated, modern building safety codes that help ensure the engineering of safe, sustainable, affordable and resilient structures.

The purpose and intent of the I-Codes is to establish a comprehensive set of minimum life health and safety standards for building activity. They are designed to be compatible with one another, providing better building construction quality and greater safety to the public. Most cities in Johnson County have either adopted or are preparing to adopt the 2018 version of the I-Codes. Work is done collaboratively at the outset among cities in order to maintain similar standards throughout the County. This provides predictability to contractors working in the area, and helps with the enforcement of life, health and safety requirements established by these codes.

Following the staff work, the codes revisions are reviewed with contractors and others in the building community for input and comment. A meeting has been scheduled for next Wednesday morning here at City Hall to begin that conversation. After the meeting, staff will review and process comments to begin to prepare for a discussion at an upcoming City Council Committee meeting. More information on the changes proposed will be available in connection with the meeting next week.