



TOWNtalk

A newsletter for Town of Chapel Hill employees

April/May 2012
Vol. 8, No. 7

www.townofchapelhill.org

On the Front Burner



Rog

Earlier this month, I presented to the Town Council a proposed budget for the 2012-13 fiscal year. I want to share with you the important parts of this draft budget that directly affect you. The budget is scheduled for adoption on June 11, after review by the Council.

To read more detail about the budget, please visit www.townofchapelhill.org/budget or request to view a print copy from Communications and Public Affairs.

Some of the highlights of the proposed budget that directly affect employees are as follows:

- 3 percent pay adjustment effective October 2012
- No layoffs of full-time employees
- Maintain employee benefits
- Continue UNC Healthcare initiative
- Healthcare costs going down for FY2013 after double digit increases since FY 2009
- Fund Ombuds Program

The Town's ability to maintain a high level of service delivery and high customer satisfaction, as shown in the recent Community Survey, is directly attributable to the quality and dedication of our workforce. The last pay adjustment for employees was in FY2008-09. Since that time employees have received two one-time payments of \$800 each in FY2010-11 and FY2011-12, but no increase to their base salary. For FY2012-13 we are recommending a 3 percent

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Donnie Rhoads

**Joined Town: February 1995
Police Sergeant**

A Chapel Hill police officer who took seven years to complete his bachelor's degree was among the 5,683 students from UNC-Chapel Hill to graduate this May.

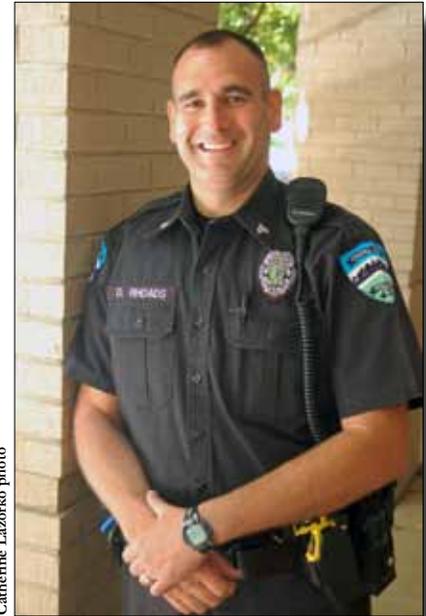
Police Sgt. Donnie Rhoads received his Bachelor of Arts in Afro-American Studies, a pursuit that began fall 2005 after he transferred to UNC-Chapel Hill from Durham Technical Community College. He studied while working fulltime, attending one or two classes at a time.

The police crash investigator and traffic enforcement team leader has had a longtime interest in history. Sgt. Rhoads decided to concentrate on Afro-American studies when it became an interesting subject introduced by his favorite lecturer, Robert Porter. Donnie said the field offers a large breadth of subjects to explore, including African American literature, history, politics, religion and religious studies, sociology, and many other disciplines within the humanities and social sciences.

When not studying in his free time, Donnie spends time with his family (wife, Amy, and their children, Corbin, 17, and Sydney, 6) and trains for marathons with his running buddy, Police Chief Chris Blue. He has completed seven marathons, including the Tobacco Road Marathon in Durham this spring. His goal is to some day run Chicago or New York City marathons.

Value in the Spotlight

Responsibility



Catherine Lazorko photo

"I am very proud of Sgt. Rhoads for his hard work and for his successful completion of his coursework at Carolina," said Chief Blue. "Many years ago, he set his sights on a degree from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and he has worked at it with determination—the same determination that makes him a great marathon runner!"

COMING UP

Monday, May 28: Town Holiday. Most municipal offices will be closed.

Friday, June 15: Employee Appreciation Luncheon, 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., Chapel Hill High School. Games, food, prizes, fun!

Saturday, June 2: CHT 5K, 9 a.m., Chapel Hill Community Center Park. Information: blitchfield@townofchapelhill.org

June 12, 14, 29, 23: Police Department Community Meetings. Information: www.townofchapelhill.org/events



Volunteers are needed for the Employee Appreciation Event on June 15. Talk to your department's Employee Forum representative to sign up. View the RESPECT video at www.vimeo.com/27573150.

In Brief



Congratulations to **Bryson Butner** (Fire) and Anna on the arrival of their new bundle of joy, daughter Alivia Caroline Butner. She arrived on April 17 at 8 lbs. 2 oz. They are tired, but smiling from ear to ear.



Welcome to the new addition to **Andrew Fuentes'** (Fire) family. Andrew's son Aaron, his wife Shawna and their son Thomas welcomed a new baby girl, Kylie Marie, on April 13.



Congratulations to **Larry Graves** (Fire) and Latasha on the new addition to their family, Lennox Donell Graves.

Lennox was born on March 15, weighed in at 8 lbs. 5 oz. and was 21.75 inches long.

Tracy Link (Parks and Recreation) has earned an AA in Medical Office Administration. Tracy has been the Parks and Recreation Office Assistant for more than nine years.

Roдео Champions!

Congratulations to Chapel Hill Transit employees who received awards in the regional Roдео on April 15. Employees from transit systems from across North Carolina and NC Department of Transportation Public Transportation Division compete to test driving skills, knowledge of safety regulations and knowledge of vehicle equipment.

From Chapel Hill Transit, 13 operators competed in LTV (light transit vehicle) and 25 operators competed in Bus. **Ricky Hunter** won the overall Bus category; **Jarvis Newman** was the overall winner in the LTV category and **Robert Earhart** was 2nd place overall winner.

The results in the van competition held on March 16 at Chapel Hill Transit were: 1st place **Akalema Pheribo**, 2nd place **Alexander Street** and 3rd place **Quentin Craven**.



Ron Telfair, Mark Geercken, and Nikkei Tabron (all Police) have received Advanced Law Enforcement Certificates. This certificate requires an advanced combination of education, law enforcement training, and experience and is the highest law enforcement recognition awarded by the State of North Carolina.

SAVE MONEY AND INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY by using videoconferencing and teleconferencing. Videoconferencing equipment has been installed in Town Hall, Police Headquarters, TOC, and Parks and Recreation Administrative Building. Please contact IT if you need training on using videoconferencing equipment. For more information, read the Local Travel Policy on the intranet.

Help the Fire Department **RAISE MONEY TO FIGHT CANCER**. Purchase "Give Cancer the Boot" T-shirts for \$20 or get a paracord bracelet kit for \$10. Stop by Fire Station 4, 101 Weaver Dairy Road Ext., or order online at www.local2580.com. Information: hrobinson@townofchapelhill.org

BE GREEN—SAVE \$\$\$ and collect rainwater to water plants and wash cars. Rain Water Solutions is offering a discount on rain barrels and compost bins to Town employees through June 18. Order at bit.ly/JxCLZf. Questions? Call 969-RAIN.



The Customer Service Training Program held a graduation ceremony on March 30. The Customer Service Certificate Program is offered each quarter. This program included 25 enthusiastic attendees from a variety of departments.



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Compliments



Clifford Odums (Transit) was complimented by a passenger for making a special trip to take the passenger to Pittsboro after he/she missed the last bus. "I just wanted to say thanks and to let you all know how Clifford went beyond the call of duty. Awesome!"

Karen Daye and **Rodney Bigelow** (both Transit) were commended by a passenger for being friendly. "Friendly bus drivers have become a part of southern Chapel Hill culture for me, and I really appreciate you all."

Michael Purdie (Transit) was thanked by Lori Evarts for being conscientious and kind. "It is great to have such a capable and friendly driver, particularly when we are all tired and ready to get home. Thank you Mr. Purdie!"

Janaina DeMeyko called to express her joy about riding with **Tracey Harris** (Transit). All the passengers like him and she can't say enough good things about him.

Chris McKoy (Transit) was thanked by Jessie Zhang for assisting her when she was waiting on the wrong side of the road. "I am really thankful for his kindness and his help."

Stephanie Lunsford and **Jessie Cameron** (both Transit) were thanked by Claudia Templeton for providing bus service for a field trip. "Impressive service."

Mario Tobias (Transit) was commended by Ana Sobocan for stopping at her regular stop. "I was deep in my thoughts, but the driver remembered where I usually get off and stopped the bus."

The Chapel Hill Police Department was commended by Steven Petrow for tending to a baby involved in a drunk driving incident. "Before I even finished calling 911, the officers were on site tending... to the needs of the baby. Thank you CHPD."

Rich Leber thanked the **Traffic Engineering Division** for improving the traffic light on Sage Road. "I think the traffic flow is much improved."

On the Front Burner

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increase to employee salaries.

In recent years, the increasing costs of health insurance have made it very difficult to maintain the Town's benefit package. After experiencing double digit medical insurance increases over the past five years, next year's medical insurance cost to the Town will decrease by 3 percent. The Town's efforts to address employee safety, wellness and healthcare that began with an employee Health Care Task Force in FY2008-09 was also a primary contributing factor to this dramatic turn-around.

We have chosen to invest in employee health and safety as a means to controlling healthcare expenditures. We believe that through this initiative we can provide a valuable benefit to employees while reversing the trend of annual double digit cost increases. Have you taken your Health Risk As-

essment? If not, I encourage you to contact Nurse Jennie Petruney at 968-2796 and help us make this program a success.

Across the country, many communities have been forced to cut services, lay-off employees and make other difficult decisions. By virtue of conservative budgeting practices, sound financial management and a local economy that has been less susceptible to economic fluctuations, we have been able to avoid drastic measures.

Despite the recent encouraging economic numbers, we have not reached budgetary equilibrium. In fact, we have several significant hurdles to clear in the next two year budget cycle that will further stress our resources. Over the past few years, despite the economic difficulties, we have been able to position ourselves financially and organizationally to move forward based on the Council's goals and vision for Chapel Hill.

SMT Notes

The following is a brief update of some of the items recently discussed by the Senior Management Team (SMT). These notes are posted on the Town's Intranet twice a month and can be accessed from your Town computer. To access the notes, type in "intranet" in your web browser, click "Published Documents" on the left-hand side of the page, then "SMT Meeting Notes" under the "Teams" column. To stay up-to-date on other Town news and activities, subscribe to Chapel Hill eNews by emailing info@townofchapelhill.org.

Community Survey: We received the results of the 2011 community survey, which were presented to Town Council and staff. **Roger Stancil** will be asking department heads to compare the results to what they identified as areas to work on their business plans. He also encourages staff to seriously think about the results and how they might be used to inform the way we operate.

Budget: According to **Ken Pennoyer**, we are by no means "out of the woods" from a budgetary perspective, but we see a "light at the end of the tunnel." He anticipates using significantly less fund balance next year to balance the budget. He is soliciting ideas for things the Town can invest in that will yield savings in out-years.

Green Tips

Sustainability

If a community is the sum of its decisions
Then a sustainable community is the sum of its sustainable decisions

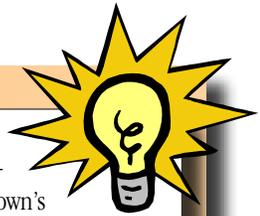
What you choose to buy
What you decide to keep
What you choose to throw away
The place you decide to live
Whether you choose to be part of a community

How you get around
Whether you are active
The food you eat
Whether you plan for a rainy day
Whether you plan for the future

How you make your investments
The things you choose to value
What you do with your spare time
The people you decide to support
Whether you choose to be engaged

—John Richardson, Sustainability Officer

Investing in Employee Health



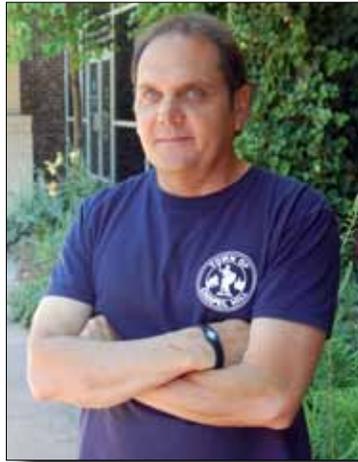
Bright Idea! Our benefits package is affected by increasing costs of healthcare. The Town's efforts to address employee safety, wellness and healthcare helps to control our expenditures. Get well, feel great, and help us build a better future!

Thanks, Wellness Committee!

I'd like to thank all those who serve on the Wellness Committee to make Chapel Hill a better place to work. Let me share with you my experience. On Dec. 31, 2011, at 4 in the morning I suffered a slight heart attack. I was admitted to Alamance Regional and a stent was put in my heart on my wife's birthday, Jan. 3 of this year. At that time I weighed roughly 225. I had not had any symptoms or problems but I did have high cholesterol and was on medication to control that. Thank God I did not suffer any damage to my heart. This was a big wake up call to me to say the least.

After returning to work shortly after all this took place Weight Watchers started up again, and of course I joined. How could one not participate with the Town splitting the cost for the first six months? My cardiologist and personal physician wanted me to lose a good 20 lbs. or so and this was perfect timing to do so. I joined in February and since that time have managed to lose a total of around 27 pounds, some I had lost on my own prior but I have lost 16.4 lbs. alone through Weight Watchers. I have also started walking on Tuesdays at noon with the walk fit group sponsored by Fleet Feet here

at Town Hall to supplement the additional exercise I get outside of work.



Catherine Lazorko photo

This past week I have had appointments to see both my cardiologist and my personal physician. Both were thrilled to see me and the changes I've been able to make, and I owe the Committee and everyone involved a "thank you" for helping participate in my success. I am now down to 195 pounds, looking to lose a few more and that will happen! My lab work today is excellent and my cholesterol is now at 137 with my HDL at 69. I'm still on some medica-

tion, and will be for some time, but everything was textbook according to my doctor. My goal is to get off as much medication as I possibly can.

I've been employed with the Town for around 13 years now. It's a fantastic place to work and a great group of people who make up Town forces. Please thank all those who serve on the Wellness Committee for me and let them know how much I appreciate the effort in helping to offer healthy advantages for Town employees. The walk fit group, the Wellness Center, Weight Watchers, and now yoga being offered is just fantastic. I encourage everyone to participate and take advantage of these great opportunities. I cannot thank the Committee enough; it's made a life changing difference in my life. Keep up the good work and THANK YOU!

I FEEL FANTASTIC!! I feel better now at the age of 47 than I did when I was in my 20's, and I'm not joking! I have more energy than I ever thought possible! Thanks again!

—Scott Newton (Public Works/Engineering)

Employee Wellness Programs

Tuesdays

Town Hall Walking Group
Noon; meet in lobby.
No special clothing required - just wear tennis shoes

Wednesdays

Weight Watchers
12:30 p.m.; Public Works Large Conference Room
Contact HR if interested in joining. Cost is \$19.99 per month for 6 months (subsidized by the Town)

Thursdays

Transit/TOC Walking Group
12:30 p.m.; meet outside Transit lobby.
No special clothing required - just wear tennis shoes

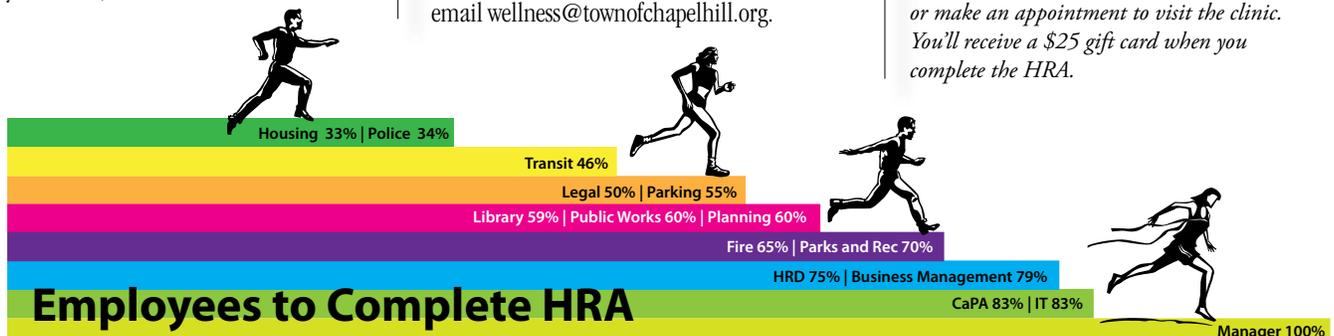
Fridays

Beginners Yoga with Ali Hinks
12:00-12:45; Hargraves Community Center.
FREE. Bring a mat and please arrive on time

Coming soon: aerobics, more yoga and nutrition classes! For more information, email wellness@townofchapelhill.org.

The Manager's Office, CaPA and IT lead the Town in the percentage of employees who have taken their Health Risk Assessment. HRD and Business Management are gaining!

To complete the HRA, you need to sign a waiver, complete a questionnaire, and visit the wellness clinic. If you haven't completed any of these components of the Health Risk Assessment, visit uncwellnessatwork.org or call 968-2796 to complete the questionnaire or make an appointment to visit the clinic. You'll receive a \$25 gift card when you complete the HRA.



Employees to Complete HRA