



# CHAPEL HILL TOWNtalk

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2019  
VOLUME 15 ISSUE 6



## On the Front Burner



### Town Manager Maurice Jones

In January, the Town Council asked us to share all the good things we did in 2018. It wasn't hard to make a video filled with your accomplishments. You can see it here: [youtu.be/WSrDeu5H-6o](https://youtu.be/WSrDeu5H-6o). As they watched the video, the Mayor and Council Members smiled and applauded, and were clearly impressed with everything that had happened. That video was all about you, our employees, and what you did to make Chapel Hill a great place in 2018. Without you, the storms would not have

been cleared away, the flooding would not have been so well-managed, and we wouldn't be seeing the new housing projects and trails and sidewalks you build. Without you, we wouldn't hear every day about the excellent service you deliver to our community.

As I thought about what we plan to accomplish in 2019, I made a New Year's resolution to listen carefully to each of you. In 2018, you welcomed me and you shared your experiences. You helped me understand what a great organization the town of Chapel Hill is. This year I'm committed to working with you to build on our strong foundation.

I believe deeply in sharing and exchanging new ideas with all of you to improve our service delivery. This is especially true when we try to tackle complex issues. I believe this to be true because of what I have already seen from

Town employees as they worked on our adverse events policy, which has been shared again for your feedback. I also saw the power of our employees around issues related to pay, and the budget.

One way to continue our conversations is through direct interaction. For this reason, in addition to TOWNtalk and other communications tools, I also plan to communicate with employees through monthly lunches. Each month I plan to meet with about 10 representatives from different departments to discuss the Town's vision and issues of the day. This will be an important opportunity to receive input directly from you. We plan to begin the lunches in April.

So please come to lunch, send me an email ([mjones@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:mjones@townofchapelhill.org)), give me a call, or stop me in the hallways and tell me what's on your mind. We may not be able to address all of your concerns but I promise I'll listen.

## Coming Up

### March 12

Health Risk Assessment begins (see p 6)

### March 14

Link Up, 9 a.m., Chapel Hill Public Library (see p 4)

### Saturday, March 16

Adventure Fest, 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Chapel Hill Community Center

### March 16-17

Quilt Exhibit, Chapel Hill Public Library

### Wednesday, March 20

Lunch and Learn: Meal Planning, noon, Hargraves Gym Meeting Room



Photo by Mark Losey

Town employees who have pledged to use alternative transportation met for breakfast and sharing an update on the program with Town Manager Maurice Jones on Feb. 13. Employees have saved 198,800 pounds of carbon emissions in a year by using alternative transportation. Currently, 70 employees have pledged to use alternative transportation during the coming year.

## LIVE BURN EXERCISE

The Chapel Hill Fire Department conducted live burn training exercises in January off Mt. Carmel Church Road near U.S. Highway 15-501. The house was being torn down to make room for a new daycare. The fire department was fortunate to use three buildings on the property to learn how fire reacts to different conditions in a controlled space without any threat to human life. These trainings are critical to the department's response in real-world situations.



Photos by Mark Losey

## POLICE PROMOTIONS

The Chapel Police Department celebrated six promotions on Monday, Feb. 11, at the Chapel Hill Public Library. Lieutenants **Preston Opegard** and **Rodney Matthews** were promoted to the highest rank on patrol. (Captain is the next highest rank and serves administrative duties and oversight for the Chapel Hill Police Department) Sergeants **Todd Harris**, **Paul Bell**, **Gabe Shinn**, and **Greg Taylor** were awarded their first supervisory roles and report to the Lieutenants.



(L-R) Mayor Pam Hemminger; Town Manager Maurice Jones; Lt. Preston Opegard; Lt. Rodney Matthews; Sgt. Paul Bell; Chief Chris Blue; Sgt. Todd Harris; Sgt. Greg Taylor; Sgt. Gabe Shinn; Orange County District Court Judge Samantha Cabe



(L-R) Sgt. Todd Harris; Sgt. Paul Bell; Chief Chris Blue; Sgt. Gabe Shinn; Sgt. Greg Taylor



(L-R) Lt. Preston Opegard; Chief Chris Blue; Lt. Rodney Matthews

Photos by Ran Northam

# Briefs

**Samantha Bauer** (Stormwater) has joined the Stormwater Division of Public Works Department as Community Education Coordinator.



**Kelly Drayton** (Fire) is our new Emergency Management Planner. Kelly was a Firefighter with the Town after she graduated

college, and has returned after working for the City of Raleigh in the same position.

**Mack Howell** (Public Works) has been promoted to Facilities Manager.



**Brandon Howell** (BMD) and wife Dana welcomed baby Helen Layne Howell at 4:40 a.m. Feb. 8. She weighed 7 lbs.

11 oz. was 21 inches long, with a full head of beautiful hair.



**Anya Grahn** (Planning) has been hired as a Senior Planner. Anya has considerable experience in the field of historic preservation. Her passion for

preservation has extended to volunteer efforts to protect historic homes and landmarks.



**Shanika Nickerson** was voted "Transit Supervisor of the Year" in December. She was selected by the Fixed Route operators because of her quick and

consistent response to issues on the buses and her respectful demeanor. The award was created by the operators to recognize supervisors and to 'give back' to supervisors who do so much for them. The award was created in the memory of former dispatcher Ernestine Garrett who was an advocate for operators to apply for internal promotions.



**Amy Oland** was named the new Director of Business Management. Amy has served our organization well in various roles during

her tenure in Chapel Hill, most recently as Interim Director of Business Management.

Congratulations to **Chris Summerlin** (Public Works) and his wife on the birth of their daughter Ellie Rhay Summerlin on Dec. 18, 2018. She weighed 6 lbs. 2 oz. and was 19" long.

**Megan Dale** (Public Works) has received the 2019 Honors Award for Engineering Excellence presented by the American Council of Engineering Companies of North Carolina (ACEC). Freese and Nichols partnered with the Town to develop and implement a new way to manage projects that incorporates the Town's culture and inclusiveness and transparency. The project included e-Builder, a customized program management information system (PMIS).

**Ernest Odei-Larbi** (Public Works-Stormwater) has been promoted to Senior Engineer.

## CHAPEL HILL MONUMENTS



*As part of the Art + Transit collaborative effort to bring public art to public transit, this artwork entitled Chapel Hill Monuments by local artist Tarish Pipkins can be seen at the MLK & Stateside bus shelter.*

## NEED MULCH?

Town employees can get free high-quality mulch from Orange County Solid Waste Management at 1207 Eubanks Road. The mulch is loose and unpackaged. A three cubic yard scoop weighs about 2,500 pounds. OCSW Staff will load pickups and trailers only. Trailers and pickups must have a tailgate. Bring a tarp to cover the load of mulch. After the OC Solid Waste Staff loads your truck or trailer you must tarp the load before leaving the facility.

Present the pass (get it on the intranet under Published Documents→CaPA) and a business card or employee ID at the scale house.

Mulch is available Monday through Friday 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (closes at 4 p.m.) and Saturday 8 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. (closes at noon). You must arrive 30 minutes before closing time.

Questions? Contact Kristina Witosky at 919-918-4916.

## EMPLOYEE HOUSING INCENTIVE PROGRAM

Town employees have an exciting new opportunity – the Town Employee Housing Incentive Program! This new program reflects the Town’s ongoing commitment to employees and advancing the Town Council’s affordable housing goals.

The Council recently approved the Employee Housing Incentive Pilot Program to assist Town employees who want to live in the community that they serve. This program was designed based on input from employees, best practices, and guidance from potential partners.

### What the Program Offers

1. **Rental Assistance:** one-time

assistance with up-front costs of rental housing (income eligibility requirements apply)

2. **Homebuyer Assistance:** down-payment and closing cost assistance for the purchase of a home (income eligibility requirements apply)

3. **Financial and Housing Counseling Workshops:** a variety of educational workshops and one-on-one counseling options for all employees to learn about family budgeting, homeownership and other housing related topics.

Meetings are being planned with individual departments. If you are interested in having an information



session with your department, or if you would like to meet with us individually, please reach out to us. For details, including eligibility requirements, contact **Nate Broman Fulks** (Housing) at 919-969-5077 or [nbfulks@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:nbfulks@townofchapelhill.org) or visit [chapelhillaffordablehousing.org/employee-housing](http://chapelhillaffordablehousing.org/employee-housing).

## MEETING DESIGN & FACILITATION TRAINING

The Town is seeking employees who are willing to learn new ways of thinking about, designing and leading meetings. Consider if you might like to become part of a facilitation team that will lead internal meetings and public engagement. This is an opportunity to receive intensive training (eight days) and add value to your department, the Town and the Chapel Hill community.

Participants are supported by their supervisors. They commit to attending daylong training sessions set for March 27, April 9-11, May 9, June 5, Sept. 11 and Oct. 5.

Applications are due by 5 p.m. Wednesday, March 13.

For more information, contact Beth Vazquez at [bvazquez@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:bvazquez@townofchapelhill.org) or 919-744-7402.

## ADVERSE EVENTS POLICY DRAFT AVAILABLE Employee Input Requested by March 15

The Town of Chapel Hill continues to circulate an updated Adverse Weather Policy Draft available at <https://www.townofchapelhill.org/policies> (see Employee Safety and Emergency Management heading) for employee review and input. The policy is expected to be implemented on March 31.

### What's Changed:

1. There are only two operating conditions: reduced operations and closed. Many of you said that the middle condition was unclear. We agreed and tried to simplify the policy.
2. Equal Time Off is still included, with examples for how to apply it. We heard that examples were necessary, and we worked with our payroll and benefits employees to help shape those.
3. Mandatory Functions replace mandatory employees. We know that some departments may want to provide even more specificity about who is required to be here under each condition. If they do so, we've asked them to work with employees to be transparent in developing more guidelines.
4. Communications expectations are clearer. We included an appendix that shows how we expect the Town to communicate during adverse events.

Employees are asked to provide feedback or clarifying questions by March 15 to the policy team via Mary Jane Nirdlinger at [mnirdlinger@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:mnirdlinger@townofchapelhill.org).

## Alliance for Innovation Opp!

Join your fellow employees at 9 a.m. March 14 for Link Up at Chapel Hill Public Library. Organized by the Town’s Alliance for Innovation Ambassadors, all are welcome! Our Alliance stems from the “Lead from wherever you are” motto, and encourages networking within our organization and beyond. The Town is also part of a national Alliance that awaits your participation with access to many resources. Create an account at

[www.transformgov.org/](http://www.transformgov.org/) with your Town email address.

Questions? Contact Rae Buckley at [rbuckley@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:rbuckley@townofchapelhill.org)

## Link Up!

A morning meet-up for coffee, idea sharing, and connection.

A Special Project Update – 9 a.m.

Thursday, March 14, 2019

Chapel Hill Public Library Meeting Room B

# Compliments

**Enoch Chan and Barry Thompson** (both Technology Solutions) were thanked by Ryan Chamberlain (Library) for addressing issues with technology.

**Tracy Mabinton** (Transit) was thanked by a passenger for being exceptionally friendly in greeting passengers and wishing them well as they left.

**Tony Hatcher** (Transit) was commended by Donna Partin for being kind and waiting while she retrieved a pager from her car at a park and ride lot.

**A Tar Heel Express driver** was thanked by Ann York for helping her get back to her hotel after she ended up at the wrong park and ride lot.

**Luca Di Michele and Barry Thompson** (both Technology Solutions) were thanked by John Richardson for helping him transition to a new laptop.

**James Bradsher** (Transit) was commended by a passenger for handing out heart-shaped lollipops on Valentine's Day.

**Ron Telfair** (Police) was thanked (from Puerto Rico) by Noemi Oquendo for saving his nephew's life. "Officer Telfair is truly a compassionate individual and great at his job."

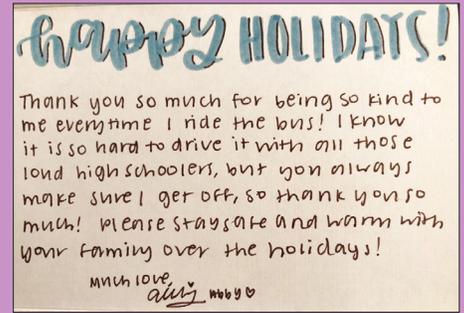
**Dajuan Johnson and Wilander Cruz** (Public Works) were thanked by Laura Fenn for coming back to pick up her yard waste when she was late putting it out (and helping bring the bins to the truck). "Their kindness made my day."

**Janice Williams** (Transit) was complimented by a customer for being helpful and friendly and having a great personality.

**Dan Earhart** (Transit) was commended by Audrey Quaye for being polite, kind and a safe driver.

**Luca Di Michele and Chris Morris** (both Technology Solutions) were thanked by Mark Agosto (Transit) for helping with the first Dossier update.

**Sanitation staff** were thanked by Frank Evans and Maureen McInerney for getting their trash bin out of the yard beside their house so they could empty it. "Amazing...they had to go thru a wet yard, down a steep hill to get to my bin."



Many notes like this were received over the holidays from Transit customers. Thank you all for demonstrating customer service, responsibility, equity, safety, professionalism and communication year-round.

**Larry Graves** (Fire) was thanked by Rick Fahrer (Police) for giving him and a retired fire chief friend from Virginia a complete tour of the new Fire Station 2 and its trucks and equipment.

**Lawrence Vincent, Shanika Nickerson and Richard Roberts** (all Transit) were thanked by a passenger for assisting her when she took refuge on the bus from a dangerous situation.

**Darryl Richardson** (Transit) was complimented by a passenger for being friendly and a safe driver. "Made my day!"

**Drew Cabe** (Police) was thanked by Bonnie Raphael for checking on her the day after she was involved in a vehicle collision.

## EXAMPLES OF EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE

There is customer service and then there is **Fred Sparrow** and **James Bradsher** level customer service! Fred (far right) doesn't just power-wash benches as he cleans shelters, he scrubs them and wipes them down. And, James (right) hands out candy to customers on holidays and thanks them for riding. I know we have other examples of excellence in customer service in Transit as we all

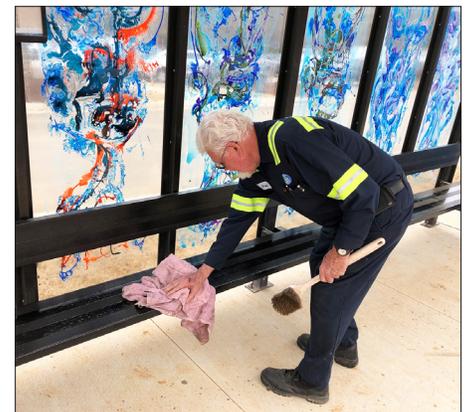


strive to learn, serve and work together to build a community where people thrive and an organization where Team

Members are valued and respected.

Thank you Transit Team Members for demonstrating our commitment to customer service and thank you James and Fred for serving as examples of excellence.

—Brian Litchfield (Transit)





### HRA Begins in March

The annual Health Risk Assessment (HRA) program will begin in March and end in May. HRA clinics will be held at different Town facilities. The schedule will be posted on flyers and shared by email. You can walk in or make an appointment at [chapelhillwellnessatwork.org](http://chapelhillwellnessatwork.org). Learn more at [chapelhillwellnessatwork.org/hra](http://chapelhillwellnessatwork.org/hra).

### Lunch and Learn: Make & Take Meals

Think outside the lunch box and start meal prepping and planning for nutrient-packed meals! Save money and reach your wellness goals! Learn more at a Lunch and Learn at noon Wednesday, March 20, in the meeting room at Hargraves Gym, 216 N. Roberson St.

The program will be led by Lana Nasrallah, Wellness@Work Dietitian/Nutritionist. Lunch will be provided! RSVP to Liska Lackey by 5 p.m. Monday, March 18, at [llackey@email.unc.edu](mailto:llackey@email.unc.edu) or 919-968-2796.

### Success Story: Angie Arrington

"If I can quit smoking, anyone can." Angie is proud to be tobacco free for more than a year and only wishes she had known about the Wellness@Work tobacco cessation program sooner. She is grateful to the coworker who told her about her own success working with Barbara Silver, tobacco cessation program manager.

Her cessation plan included using nicotine patches and gum to help fight cravings and substituting healthy behaviors such as going to the gym and drinking water for smoking or vaping.

As Angie became healthier, she found herself wanting to smoke less and less. One milestone was seeing her carbon monoxide level decrease from

### Expanded clinic services

Have you heard the great news? Dependents covered by Town health insurance can receive care at the Wellness Clinic at no cost. Fill out an enrollment form and return it to Kelly Stokes (HRD).

Insured employees, retirees and dependents can receive after-hours care (with no co-pay) from 5 to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday at UNC Urgent Care at the Family Medicine Center, 590 Manning Drive.

### Work Your Weigh to Wellness

begins Wednesday, April 3. Classes will be held from noon to 1 p.m. on Wednesdays from April 10 to June 26 at Hargraves Center, 216 N. Roberson St. Get information on nutrition and healthy eating habits, set goals and get peer support. To sign up, contact Liska Lackey at [llackey@email.unc.edu](mailto:llackey@email.unc.edu) or 919-968-2796.

34 to 3 parts per million over just four sessions!

Angie loved the program's free medication and support. She felt Barbara was rooting for her to succeed. She is pleased that she no longer stinks like cigarette smoke, has lost weight and feels so much better. If you'd like to take advantage of the Wellness@Work Tobacco Cessation program, call or text Barbara Silver, 919-904-4848 or email [barbara\\_silver@med.unc.edu](mailto:barbara_silver@med.unc.edu).



## GREEN TIPS



### What's one easy way to reduce waste?

Pass on the plastic straw. There are now so many straws being used that we can wrap the entire planet from the number that are thrown away in a single day. Straws are fun, though, so look for the reusable metal or compostable paper kinds – they're so much easier with milkshakes!

### What's one simple way to recycle?

Try returning your metal clothes hangers. If you use a dry cleaning service—or even if you don't—see if your local store can reuse or recycle your unwanted wire hangers. Also, those big dry-cleaner bags can be recycled with other plastic bags at most grocery stores.

## Our Mission and Values

### Mission

Learning, serving and working together to build a community where people thrive!

### Values

- Responsibility
- Equity
- Safety
- Professionalism
- Ethics
- Communication
- Teamwork

