



CHAPEL HILL Towntalk

July 2020
VOLUME 16 ISSUE 7

COUNCIL MEETINGS GO VIRTUAL

Amy Harvey (Communications and Public Affairs) began her career at the Town in December 2000. In her current role as Deputy Town Clerk, Amy works with the Council acting as a kind of "council meeting choreographer," putting material together for council meetings, pulling items and documents that need to be reviewed, coordinating with the "stage and screen" crew to ensure all the different players (clerk, manager, attorney, staff who are presenting) have what they need and that everything is ready to go for a smooth council meeting.

Amy has worked with Technology Solutions Director **Scott Clark** and Technical Services and Support

Manager **Tim Czupka** to create a virtual meeting space for our council (currently on its summer break). "I've had to learn new software and try to figure out how to connect our virtual meeting space to our existing streaming space," Amy said, referring to Council meetings being streamed live on both the web and Gov-TV. This took some time to figure out: Amy had to try different software before finding Zoom Webinar, which works for the needs of the Council, advisory boards, and residents.

"It's not all me, though!" Amy said. **John Richardson, Adam Nicholson, Michael Sudol, Jomar Pastorelle** and **Judy Johnson** and her staff helped figure out how to make it work, and

helped train board members on how to use technology from home.

The ultimate goal, she says, is trying to increase the ease by which people are getting comfortable with remote video. Parts of the learning process have been fun and refreshing for her: "We keep improving as we go along," she said. "Plus, I've always been a 'student'. I love to learn new things, even when it's challenging!"



"Your efforts are being noticed by our community. The Town Council has praised your hard work almost every time I speak with them. Thank you for all you are doing, especially under these difficult circumstances. And, please, stay healthy!"

—Town Manager Maurice Jones

FIRE DEPARTMENT ADAPTS TO CHANGES

Gerry Boone, Lonnie Harp, Carmen Garci, and **Scott Carrol** (all Fire) share changes to the community that they've observed during the COVID-19 situation. They want residents to know that the Fire Department is still here for them in a fire or rescue emergency because policies and procedures have been put in place to make sure that they can continue to respond.

They are finding it more challenging to connect with patients. They have to go through a slightly slower, more physically distant process to treat patients safely while protecting everyone on the scene through PPE and physical distancing.

Usually spring and the end of the UNC semester is a very busy time, but this spring, the Fire Department received less calls at night because people were not participating in nightlife. More people are walking, but not in a hurry to be somewhere.

In addition to regular duties, they are assisting with keeping critical services up and running (for example, helping to decontaminate Town buildings).

They miss being out in the community and having positive interactions with residents, but when they do go out, residents are grateful and happy to see them.

HELPING PEOPLE FIND ANSWERS

Maia Schuster (Library) began her career with the Town four years ago as a Library Experience Assistant. Her time is spent equally in the back working on everything from programming to sorting books, to being out on the floor of the library, finding information for patrons, helping with technology issues in the lab, helping people with resumes and school assignments, and of course, finding books. "I may not know the answer, but I know how to hunt it down!"

This has made Maia's transition from her Library Experiences job to Call Center Manager very natural.

"When people call worried-looking for financial or food assistance—we're able to provide links to services. It reassures them and makes them feel better".

Maia has also been encouraged when talking with community members that want to contribute locally: "When the call center first opened, a lot of calls were from people offering assistance," she says. "I was able to refer them to OC Health, local county organizations, food distribution orgs, diaper banks, etc." With this, Maia was truly able to make her experience with the call center (which is currently closed) one that engages with the community and gets things done.



THE BABBLING BROOK

Another Corona virus day, taking thousands of people in it's way.

To escape more bad news, and the inside air,
I took a long walk under nature's care.

As I walked along the babbling brook some
Deer and birds came out to look.

White clouds floating so high in a clear blue sky,
And black birds glided as a breeze passed by.

The babbling brook had much to say,
As a butterfly crossed my way.

Glistening water flowing over the rocks
Made my heart so high, it made me cry..

Yes, the babbling brook had much to say,
As I walked along my way.y

Maybe the virus came as a wake-up call,
For people too busy to hear nature's call.

The babbling brook has much to say as
I walk along my way...

In my mind Mother's words now play,
"What a beautiful day the Lord has made".

To escape the virus in this time frozen day,
Go see what the babbling brook may say.

By: Hal Jordan (Transit)

VIRTUAL PARKS AND RECREATION PROGRAMS

Keith Dodson, Recreation Specialist at the Chapel Hill Community Center, hasn't let park and facility closures stop him from showing those of all ages his personal and professional passions: outdoor education and adventure programming.

Keith has led several successful virtual programs, including an adventure hunt, rock climbing adventure, and Bolin Creek exploration. He's also helping to ensure that Parks and Recreation's 25+ park monitors have what they need to be effective in educating the public about COVID-19. These staff are essential in stopping the spread of COVID-19 in Chapel Hill

parks. Even as the Community Center is closed, Keith reports to the site to be sure that everything is maintained and ready to go once facilities reopen.

Like Keith, **Robena Meek** strives to include and educate the community about her lifelong passions: art and creativity. As the Community Clay Studio Coordinator, Robena collaborates with other departments to produce activity guides shared at various places around town, including public housing weekly food drives, the Rogers Road Community Center, and shelters. Robena is coordinating arts-based virtual programming which have been a hit with both employees and town residents.

NOW IS A GREAT TIME TO QUIT SMOKING/VAPING

Smoking weakens lung function and increases the risk of dying from a COVID-19 infection. If you would like help quitting smoking, vaping or using smokeless tobacco, the Wellness@Work Employee Program

is here for you. The program and medications are free to all Town employees and dependents. Contact Barbara Silver, Tobacco Treatment Specialist, at 919-904-4848 or barbara_silver@med.unc.edu.

Published by:
Town of Chapel Hill
405 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.
Chapel Hill, NC 27514

publicaffairs@townofchapelhill.org or (919) 968-2743

This special issue was prepared by the COVID-19 Joint Information Center (JIC) including Melissa Bartoletta, Rae Buckley, Matt DeBellis, Melanie Miller, Ran Northam, Megan Peters, Emily Powell, Daniel Siler, Christina Strauch, Jeffrey Sullivan, Wes Tilgman and Sarah Viñas

TOWNtalk, a publication for and about Town of Chapel Hill employees, is issued monthly September through June.

It is printed on recycled paper.

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