

City Manager's Report

February 26, 2021

Council and Colleagues, greetings. These reports will be included in the City Council packet for regularly scheduled Council meetings, excluding Work Session meetings. The reports are intended to be informational, covering miscellaneous events and topics involving the City organization.

In no particular order...

Fire Department

An amazing story here.

At approximately 5:00 p.m. on the 11th of February, the Flagstaff Fire Department and Summit Fire and Medical responded multiple units to the report of an injured hiker on Mount Elden. Crews arrived on scene and did their best to locate the injured hiker by using information from the patient's cell phone call to 911 (prior to his phone dying) and some tips from reporting parties in the area. The patient was located a short while later by a helicopter that was searching the area.

Due to the challenging terrain and weather conditions, the decision was made to bring two members of Coconino County Sheriff's Office (CCSO) Search and Rescue team and one member from the FFD's short haul team up to the patient and stay overnight until a safer rescue operation could be performed in the morning.

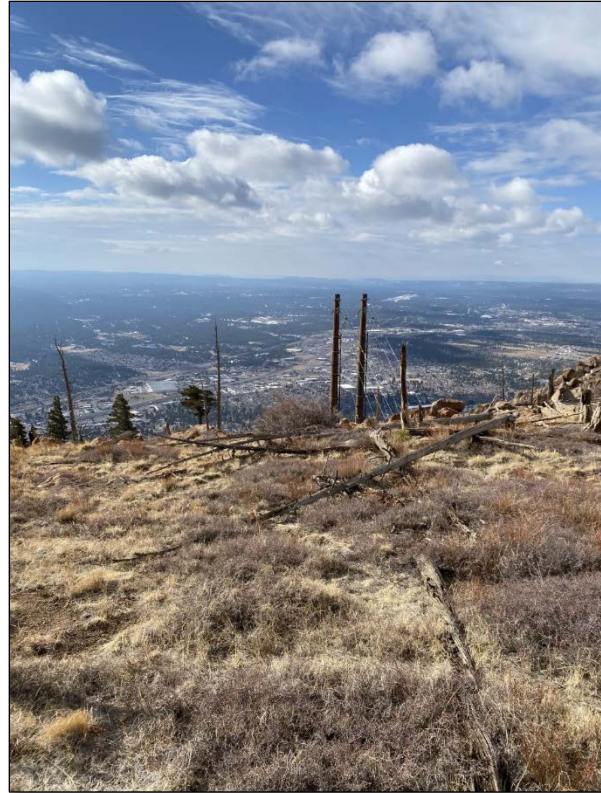
Wes Forbach was summoned back to the scene to assist the two members from CCSO Search and Rescue who were with the injured hiker. The three rescuers arrived at the patient just before midnight and relieved the DPS paramedic to return to normal duty. The three rescuers provided a sleeping bag, warm clothing, a warm meal and liquids. Wes used his paramedic skills to provide intravenous pain medication to the patient and braced for a long and cold night ahead.

At first light, the DPS helicopter returned with a member of the Highlands Fire Department short haul team and the patient was safely removed from the scene. The remaining three rescuers on scene hiked up to the radio towers on top of Mount Elden where they were met by CCSO and driven down safely.

Chief Gaillard commented, "we are so proud of Wes Forbach's contribution to the rescue effort with our partners. Wes's response is an example of our mission, vision & values in action."



The image to the right shows the steep drop-off from the summit. Through combined and collaborative, the rescue was successful, and very likely a life-saving event considering the cold temperatures and conditions. The short haul of the patient from the dangerous terrain to the mountain summit is shown in the short video link here [Video Link](#). It reveals the extreme terrain of the site.

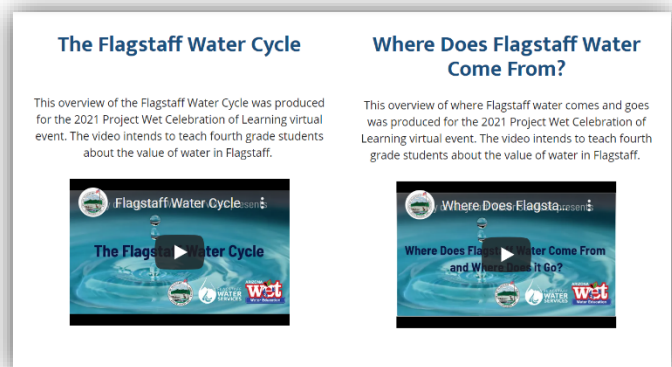


Water Services Division

In follow up to the Water Services presentation at the last Council Work Session, some additional reference material is presented here. Staff has completed, and posted online two, two-minute videos on Flagstaff's water, "*Where Flagstaff's Water Comes From*" and "*The Flagstaff Water Cycle*". This was completed as part of the state's Celebration of Learning for fourth grade classes, to replace the annual Project Wet, which was cancelled last September due to the pandemic.

These wonderful educational videos are on the City's Water Resources page and can be accessed on the City's website at the following link.

<https://www.flagstaff.az.gov/3981/Educational-Videos>



Retirement of Neil Gullickson

January 2021

This January, our senior Planning Development Manager, Neil Gullickson, stepped down from his position with the City of Flagstaff Community Development Division after 24 years and 2 days of service.

Neil said of his decision, “please understand my resignation at this time leaves me with a heavy heart. Working with the City, Community Development, and especially Current Planning has truly been a memorable experience.” Neil’s dedication and hard work is visible throughout our city, in the hundreds of projects he has reviewed, always with an eye towards making our home a better place. Neil has served as a role model and a mentor, and staff has benefited from his wisdom, his insights, and his forthright, refreshingly blunt, communication style.

Neil joined the City of Flagstaff in 1997. He has served as the planner on such pivotal projects as Flagstaff Medical Center, Flagstaff Airport, Juniper Point and Canyon del Rio. Neil’s impact will continue to be felt far into the future.

It will be difficult once we return to City Hall to see a new face behind the desk in what has been Neil’s office for as long as we can remember. We will miss his wry smile and his generous advice. We look forward to having a proper send off, once Covid-19 recedes and Neil is looking forward to time with his friends and family. This should be no surprise coming from the young man who qualified as an Olympic swimmer, the NAU student who worked at Ruff’s Guns and Liquor, and fell in love with his professor. Coming from the man who is always up for an adventure in the forest, and never let a little thing like a broken hip keep him down...



Other Community Development Updates

- **2021-2031 Housing Plan**

Over 100 stakeholders have expressed interested in publicly participating in the 2021-2031 Housing Plan by submitting their information via a Survey Monkey response. Informal Working Groups for the Housing Plan have been established with Commissioners, Community Members and City Staff. The six informal working groups are currently scheduling meetings in early March. Stay tuned.

- **Recruitment Efforts**

The Planning & Development Services section has recently experienced a significant turn over in existing staff due retirements and promotions. The section is working to fill two Associate Planner positions and two Planning Development Manager positions. As of 2-26-21, offers have been made on both Associate Planner positions and staff is waiting on responses from the applicants. We hope to have both of these positions filled shortly and begin the process of training. Both Planning Development Manager positions have been widely posted and staff is utilizing every resource to solicit applications for these very important positions. We look forward to being fully staffed as soon as possible.

More from the Fire Department ...

The Fire Department responded to Safeway where a 90-year old male had fallen. He was concerned about leaving his purchased groceries and vehicle at Safeway, so the Fire Department personnel took the vehicle and groceries to his spouse (who is unable to drive). The crew also made arrangements for the spouse to join her husband at FMC. Full circle customer service at its finest!

Human Resources

HR staff have been meeting with several divisions to work on how employees will transition into the new pay plan structures and what they would like to see in those structures. Props to HR for the teamwork and collaboration!

Police Department

- The Text to 911 implementation has been completed and a media release was issued to explain the new service to the community and when it would be appropriate to use this new service.
- February 24th began a new Citizen's Police Academy.
- The City's alternate response team held a Town Hall on Wednesday, February 3rd to gather community stakeholder feedback on Public Safety Alternative Response Model services. Their feedback was considered in the final draft of the Request for Proposal that will go out Friday, February 26th. Providers can provide a proposal for the alternate care center and/or mobile response unit depending on their areas of expertise. The proposals should be received by March 26th for review and evaluation.
- More on lifesaving measures here!
On February 24th, around midnight, Officer Guy Rogers responded to the Pinecrest Motel after a report of a one-year-old baby not breathing. The baby was in fact not breathing and turning blue when he arrived. Officer Rogers performed CPR and lifesaving measures on the baby boy for nearly five minutes until medical personnel arrived. The baby is currently in stable condition thanks to the efforts of Officer Rogers.

Great Work Officer Rogers!



Public Works

- Donated hand sanitizer stations (six total) are being installed this week at Buffalo Park, Bushmaster Park, Foxglenn Park, Thorpe Park, Heritage Square, and Wheeler Park. A special thank you to the realty group that facilitated the donation will occur with a plaque on each station, to be installed soon. (see pictures below)



- Cinder cleanup has been ongoing on the FUTS, City-owned sidewalks, and other impacted areas from the recent snowstorms.
- Staff is assisting Code Compliance regarding some illegal access to land adjacent to the University Heights subdivision by placing boulders where motor vehicles are accessing the area.
- The greenhouse project continues with framing upright late last week. Seeds have been ordered for the pollinator plants, and discussions are ongoing regarding educational signage.



- Mark Stento, Code Compliance Officer, Sylvia Struss, Open Space Events and Outreach VISTA, Amy Hagin, Public Works Manager, Gino Leoni, Public Works Supervisor, and a dedicated group of community volunteers supported a graffiti removal project for McMillan Mesa Natural Area on Saturday, February 20, 2021. Efforts successfully removed graffiti from basalt boulders at four different locations. The Open Space program greatly appreciates efforts to care for this community asset! Before and after pictures are below, along with pictures of volunteers completing the work. (pictures below)



- Joe C. Montoya Community and Senior Center staff are currently working with Coconino County and North Country Healthcare to bring a mobile vaccine unit to the Center in the near future.
- Jay Lively hosted a special Valentine's themed "Sweetheart Skate" for adult couples on Saturday, February 13th. Couples were given a goody bag to share after finishing their skate. Capacity was limited and social distancing was maintained.
- Genevieve Pearthree, City Planning Development Manager, and Jessica Drum, Public Affairs Director, assisted the Open Space program in preparing an article for the Western Planner. The item was chosen for publication and highlights the community's initiative to preserve the McMillan Mesa Natural Area and the Zoning Map Amendment in progress that proposes to rezone the property to Public Open Space. The article can be read at <https://www.westernplanner.org/2021/2021/2/12/integrating-communities-within-natural-space>.

Meetings & Updates

- The Flagstaff Downtown Business Alliance Board meeting occurred on Thursday, February 25th. Topics included the ongoing efforts to provide outside seating and spacing, and the Council's recent decisions to increase event capacity to 50 persons. There was also an update regarding the City's efforts related to parking structures in the downtown area (Foundation for Senior Living) and old courthouse site.
- The Indigenous Circle of Flagstaff (ICF) met on February 17th. Rebecca Sayers attended on behalf of Park & Rec and presented a path forward with respect to the community vetting process for repurposing the old Public Works building in Thorpe Annex.
- The Indigenous Commission met on Feb. 25th. Much discussion occurred with respect to the function of the Commission, future scheduling, and related housekeeping matters. Thanks to Rose Toehe for facilitating.
- We have had multiple Divisional Budget meetings over the past several days, and these will continue into the week of March 1st. The Team will be laboring to reduce some of the proposed expenditures and reach a recommended outcome that will find its way to the Council retreat at the end of April (April 22nd and 23rd). With the ascension within the Recession Plan, there are numerous requests addressing programs, capital improvements, operational costs, staffing, and equipment purchases. This is of no surprise as we the City has been in a 'freeze' budgetarily on many of these items since April, 2020. Notably, all new requests over the base budget amounts are being reviewed through the Priority Based Budgeting (PBB) tool.
- I have started participating in a Coaching Intensive with Lancaster Leadership. This coaching program, with 14 attendees from multiple organizations here and out of state, will span the next few months. Very helpful.

That's all for now, Mayor and Council. Onward and upward ...