



W E S T C H I C A G O
CITY BULLETIN

SPRING 2024



ADMINISTRATOR'S MESSAGE

Dear City of West Chicago staff:

In last quarter's Bulletin, I shared a new opportunity for interested City employees to chat with Tia Messino and me on a quarterly basis. These "Ask the Administrator" sessions will be held the third Tuesday in February, May, August and November and our first one will be on May 21st from 8:00-9:30 a.m. at City Hall; we will rotate building locations (and potentially time periods) each quarter so that it may be more convenient for those not located within City Hall. No sign-up is necessary. If you are interested in joining us for one or more sessions, please let your Department Head know a few days in advance so that your request can be accommodated; you need not stay for the entire time, especially if there are multiple people from a Department or Division wishing to attend the same day.

These open-door sessions are an opportunity to ask questions, raise concerns, share ideas or just find out what the City is doing and where it is going. This is your chance to share any thoughts you've had on new services, opportunities, or ways we can enhance our service delivery, regardless of whether an idea has been rejected before. All ideas will be shared with the Senior Leadership Team for discussion, anonymously if that's desired. It is also a great opportunity to get to know one another better. This said, these "Ask the Administrator" sessions are not meant to address issues of pay and benefits, or concerns with co-workers or supervisors. There are more appropriate avenues for dealing with these concerns, and they also should be dealt with in a timely manner if they arise.

For those wishing to attend our first session on May 21st, here's a question to think about: how was your onboarding experience with the City of West Chicago, and what would you suggest we do differently for future hires? The Senior Leadership Team is looking to create a formal onboarding program for new hires, and we'd appreciate your feedback.

See you on May 21st.

Best regards,
Michael Guttman, City Administrator



QUARTERLY QUOTABLES

"One of the most sincere forms of respect is actually listening to what another has to say."

- Bryant H. McGill



EMPLOYEE MILESTONES

Please extend a warm welcome or offer congratulations to the following employees who have achieved a significant milestone with the City the past season.

New Employees

- Julissa Gutierrez-Meza; Account Clerk (01/02/2024)
- Lizeth Romero; Police Records Clerk (01/02/2024)
- Cinai Beltran; Police Records Clerk (01/02/2024)
- Adam Barney; Maintenance Worker II (01/20/2014)
- Kiel Day; Maintenance Worker II (01/06/2014)

5 Years of Service

- Ryan Moore; Police Officer Detective (01/11/2019)
- John Sterrett; Assistant Director of Community Development (03/01/2019)

1 Year of Service

- Tia Messino; Assistant City Administrator (01/23/2023)
- Joseph Guerra; Police Officer (01/23/2023)

Work Anniversaries

25 Years of Service

- *Anthony Cargola*; Deputy Police Chief (03/04/1999)

20 Years of Service

- *Robbi Peterson*; Police Sergeant (01/05/2004)

15 Years of Service

- *Michael Cummings*; Police Officer (02/26/2009)
- *Tim Carey*; Maintenance Worker II (01/05/2009)

10 Years of Service

- *Jordan Shook*; Maintenance Worker II (01/27/2014)

- Gerardo Solis; Police Officer (01/23/2023)

- Diana Soltess; Assistant Finance Director (02/14/2023)

Explore What's Great Outdoors in West Chicago with WeGo Exploring

Staff members invited to participate in WeGo Exploring initiative to win prizes

City staff are encouraged to explore what's great outdoors in West Chicago as part of the WeGo Exploring initiative. As featured on the Weather Channel's 'America's Morning Headquarters,' WeGo Exploring is a community initiative launched in 2023. It aims to showcase the diverse outdoor attractions of West Chicago while also promoting the benefits of physical and mental well-being through outdoor activities.

This year, all City staff members are invited to participate in the initiative. To join, staff simply need to venture outdoors in West Chicago, snap a photo, and share it at westchicago.org/wegoexploring using their City email address. The



WeGo exploring
EXPLORE WHAT'S GREAT OUTDOORS IN WEST CHICAGO

deadline for submissions is June 28th. Participants will have a random chance to win one of five City tumblers for their participation.

Additionally, staff members can go a step further by registering for the WeGo Exploring Scavenger Hunts. Simply follow the instructions on the landing page to participate. Scavenger Hunt initiatives involve

checking in at locations or events, capturing photos of specific items, or answering questions. Hunts are announced at different times, and registered participants will be notified of new opportunities and eligible for various prizes.

If you'd like more information or would like to participate visit westchicago.org/wegoexploring and simply head out to explore what's great outdoors in West Chicago.

Looking for More Outdoor Fun?

Save the date for the City's Fit 4 Fall 5K being held on Saturday, September 21st. Details, including a registration link, will be available at westchicago.org/fit4fall by June 2024.



Volunteers Needed for Trails Clean-up Event on April 27

Volunteers are needed to help with the cleanup of the Great Western Trails and the Illinois Prairie Path that is scheduled for Saturday, April 27th in honor of Earth Day.

Volunteers will be needed at approximately 9:00 a.m. Participants are asked to bring work gloves and garbage bags, along with friends and family, to pick up litter along the trails.

The Friends of the Great Western Trails schedules this trail cleanup event annually with the goal of cleaning all the trails. West Chicago volunteers will focus on cleanup near the Great Western Trail end point at Sassafras Drive.

If interested in volunteering, please contact the City of West Chicago's Volunteer Coordinator, Alderman Sandy Dimas, at sdimas@westchicago.org.



National Safety Month: Promoting a Culture of Safety in the Workplace

Staff Fitness Membership Program Expanded

As part of continued efforts to support employee well-being, the City piloted a partial reimbursement of an ARC Fitness Center Membership last year. Based on your survey feedback, we are expanding the Program this year to cover any fitness center, enabling employees to prioritize wellness conveniently. Employees not already covered with a fitness reimbursement determined by a Collective Bargaining Agreement can have 50% of their fitness center membership reimbursed, up to \$100. In-person fitness centers not your style? Check with Human Resources Division staff to see if your preferred virtual fitness classes qualify.

To use the incentive, employees will need to submit their receipt/s to Human Resources Division staff by Friday, December 6th, 2024. Once documentation has been verified, participating employees will receive a reimbursement check from the City by the end of January 2025.

Blue Cross Blue Shield also offers discounted fitness memberships through its Blue 365 Program. Visit www.blue365deals.com for more details.

As June approaches, we turn our focus to National Safety Month, a time to reinforce our commitment to workplace safety. At the City of West Chicago, safety is not just a set of rules; it's ingrained into our culture by employees like you.

Safety Culture is about being vigilant, proactive, and taking responsibility not only for ourselves but for our colleagues as well. We are fortunate to have an engaged Safety Committee with employees from every department who advance new policies and advocate for their peers.

Whether it's following procedure, keeping an organized workspace, or promptly reporting potential hazards, each of us plays a vital role in ensuring a safe environment.

The Safety Committee is excited to remind you to submit your risk management ideas to the Safety Suggestion program. Simply describe a concept not currently

in place that may eliminate or prevent potential hazards and aid in the safety of our employees and residents. The Safety Committee will award \$100 to the best, achievable suggestion twice a year, in July and December. Contact staff in the Human Resources Division to submit your suggestion or if you have any program questions.

Remember, if you encounter a situation that requires prompt action to prevent danger, please notify your supervisor for immediate correction. If you see something, say something.

Let's make National Safety Month a time to renew our commitment to safety. Together, we can ensure that every employee feels secure and valued.

Please note, Safety Committee members and Department and Division Heads are not eligible to receive a prize.

Financial Wellness Planning Materials Available on Employee Shared Drive

Thank you to all staff members who were able to attend the April 9th financial wellness lunch and learn session led by the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund (IMRF) and the Money Management Educators (MME). Both presenters emphasized the importance of having a balanced financial plan, having a short- and long-term strategy for saving and investing, and starting early in order to reach your financial goals.

For those unable to attend and those looking to revisit the

presentation, materials will be uploaded to the Health and Wellness Folder in the Employee Shared Drive. Staff members are also encouraged to visit the IMRF Member Access Learning Center on the IMRF website for additional educational resources.

If you have any questions about the presentation of your financial benefits with the City, please contact staff in the Human Resources Division.

Long-Standing Projects Moving Forward in 2024

The City formally executed several grant agreements in the beginning of 2023 with the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), including: repainting the Fremont Street Water Tower; the completion of the West Washington Street Environmental Remediation project; and the installation of a traffic signal at Roosevelt Road and Technology Boulevard.

The City has been anticipating completing each of these projects for several years but needed the appropriate agreements in place in order to be reimbursed for the costs of each. With the new agreements finally in place, the City will be able to proceed with each of these important projects and, in the process, save approximately \$2 million.

- The Fremont Street Water Tower will finally get a fresh coat of paint after several years of waiting. For background, the tower is the City's oldest water tower, constructed in 1952, and has not been painted since 1990. It initially faced demolition due to its small size despite functioning properly. However, considering the development plans for the adjacent Washington Street property, the City decided to retain the water tower as it didn't impact development. After receiving the proper grant agreement to proceed with the project, the City Council authorized a contractor to repaint the tower, with work having started in the first week of April.

- The City will receive funding to assist with supporting the costs

for the environmental remediation of West Washington Street. At this time, the City is awaiting a report from its Civil and Environmental Engineering consultant that will provide remediation options and costs based on residential versus industrial/commercial land uses. Although this report is anticipated to be received by the end of this year, the project is progressing, and with the additional grant funding, the City will finally be able to prepare this property for development, including the new proposed municipal campus that was presented to the City Council's Development Committee in March of this year.

- The City performed several studies in 2022 for the installation of a new traffic signal at IL-38 and Technology Boulevard. The project required coordination with the Illinois Department of Transportation and the DuPage Airport Authority to receive a 'greenlight' to proceed with installation. With the new grant agreement in place, the City will be able to move forward with the installation of this much-needed traffic signal. This project is anticipated to start in Fall 2024.

The City has many great projects in the works and on the horizon, many of which will be outlined in Mayor Pineda's State of the City Address on May 20th. A recap of the Address will be provided in the Summer Bulletin.

Let the Good Times Bloom

Blooming Fest is Saturday, May 18th

The City's Blooming Fest event returns Saturday, May 18th from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Downtown West Chicago will come alive with the sights, sounds, and scents of the new season as part of the City's annual spring celebration.

One of the main attractions of the event is the large plant sale hosted by the West Chicago Garden Club. The enormous plant sale includes thousands of plants for viewing and purchase. While gardening enthusiasts will enjoy developing their green thumbs at the plant sale, visitors can also browse through more than 50 craft, garden, and food vendors while also enjoying some live music.

This event is fun for all ages and all City staff members are encouraged to come out for a day with their family and friends to enjoy the downtown area in the community they serve.

Visit westchicago.org/bloomingfest for more information.