

PUBLIC WORKS & UTILITIES

November/December 2015
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Paving the way for a brighter future by educating, engaging and empowering our employees

Director's Corner — Farewell, My Unsung Heroes!

Four years ago, when Mayor Beutler asked me to help him, I didn't say yes to the job because it was going to be easy. I said yes because it was going to be hard. It was going to be a challenge for all of us. But I knew if we could overcome the challenges, there was a promise of something greater. I knew in my heart that this Department was really special.

I knew it was comprised of unsung and unseen heroes who were not in the business of tooting their own horns or engaging in self-promotion, but rather in the business of getting things done.

Unsung heroes are the doers of great deeds who go without praise or recognition. There are no parades in their name, no public celebrations. In fact, they prefer it that way. They neither expect nor require acclaim or attention. What they do is add tremendous value to the lives of others. I've always understood that about our Department. I've understood that no one joins a Public Works and Utilities Department because it makes you popular or famous. Instead, we are driven by something bigger than

ourselves. We have an inherent impulse to help — to be a solution, an answer, a remedy, a fix. We're built for excellence and have no trouble sacrificing greatly to achieve it. Making 21st century civilization work is our purpose.

As a result, I felt it was my job to make sure citizens knew about my unsung heroes. I was your cheerleader, your biggest fan, your advocate, your loyalist. I shamelessly and unapologetically bragged about how phenomenal you are. I was relentless in singing your praises! Because the truth is, we are so lucky to have you. And it doesn't matter if everyone knows it or not. All that matters to me now is that you know it — my unsung heroes. I deeply admire and honor each and every one of you, and I promise to never stop singing your praises.

*All my heart,
Miki*

“How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard.”

— Winnie the Pooh

Congrats to PWU Award Winners!

Two PWU employees were recently recognized for their outstanding work:

Rick Roberts was presented the Outstanding Service as a Water Operator award at the November American Water Works Association conference in Kearney. Rick has been with Lincoln Water System (LWS) since 1978. He has been instrumental in numerous plant expansions, system upgrades and emergency responses. Rick is a great example of a longtime water industry professional with valuable knowledge and expertise in operating and maintaining water systems.

Rick has been a champion for energy management and conservation at LWS for many years. His efforts in data collection and reporting, knowledge of electrical rate plans and understanding of electrical use throughout the entire system have resulted in hundreds of thousands of dollars in energy cost savings for LWS. As a licensed water operator, Rick takes great ownership in the utility. Each day, he works to ensure water supplied to Lincoln is safe, and the

infrastructure used to supply, treat and distribute water is properly maintained and operated. Congratulations, Rick, on this well-deserved award!

Brad Barber, Lincoln Wastewater System (LWWS) Superintendent of Operations for Water Pollution Control (WPC), was presented the William D. Hatfield award at the November Nebraska Water Environment annual conference in Kearney. The award is given to operators of wastewater treatment facilities for outstanding performance and professionalism. The award was established in honor of the Superintendent of the Decatur, Illinois, Sanitary District, who was President of the Central States Sewage Works Association from 1944-45, and served as President of the Federation from 1958-59.

“Brad has been a leader in the field of water pollution control for many years,” said Steve Crisler, LWWS Superintendent of WPC Facilities. “I cannot think of a more deserving person in our industry than Brad Barber.”



Brad Barber accepts the William D. Hatfield Award from Eileen O'Neill, Executive Director of the Water Environment Federation.



From left, Fred Baumert, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS); Rick Roberts, LWS; and Andy Hahle, DHHS.

Strong Lincs

“There is no ‘Division’ among our Divisions.”
Miki Esposito

PWU Director Miki Esposito is pleased to announce the Strong Linc Award recipients for the workplace principle of being community focused. Please congratulate these Strong Lincs for their valued service.

Gaylon Masek (Engineering Services)

As a Project Manager, Gaylon has the ability to take on existing projects that are highly scrutinized by the public and media. He addresses concerned citizens on street closures and keeps them informed on what phase the project is in and what they can expect to see next. While contractors are away on another project or have a limited crew, Gaylon eases the minds of concerned citizens by reassuring them that the project has not been forgotten, alleviating misunderstandings and speculation.

Sara Slama, Nancy Nelson, Iris Weger, Becky Smith and Susie Filipi (Engineering Services)

Sara, Nancy, Iris, Becky and Susie are recognized for their efforts in running the extremely successful Food Bank campaign for Engineering Services. They put a lot of time and effort into something that shows support for the community at large.

Rock Krzycki (Watershed Management) and Terry Kathe (Building and Safety)

Rock and Terry are recognized for their diligent efforts on the Community Rating System (CRS) recertification process. The CRS is a FEMA program that provides a 25-percent reduction in flood insurance premiums for Lincoln property owners in the floodplain that have flood insurance. This included mailing an annual floodplain information letter to more than 3,400 property owners in or near a floodplain.

Ellen Wright and Erin Kubicek (Watershed Management)

Ellen and Erin are recognized for their continuing stormwater community education efforts, including rain garden and rain barrel classes, brochures, a sustainable landscape program, stream and lake cleanups and education to school classes.

Laura Neergaard (StarTran)

Laura has been working for StarTran for just over a year, and she has proven to be a great asset in the way she works with the public, both over the telephone and in person. She truly cares about the community, and has participated in several of our public events promoting ridership by assisting with route information and sharing her sunny disposition.

Scott Opfer (Engineering Services)

Scott was nominated for his continued participation in the Snow Angels program. Not only did he originate the program, he continues to be a supporter and scoops driveways on his own time for people who call.

A FAREWELL NOTE

Best wishes to our PWU colleagues on their retirement from City employment. We appreciate their service to our community. May they find success in all their future endeavors!

Ben Cohoon

Street Maintenance – 36 years

Jay Edminston

Street Maintenance – 43 and ½ years

Fred Fleming

Fleet Services – 38 years

Glenna Graupmann

Water – 14 years

Dennis Hall

Street Maintenance – 25 years

Frank Larson

Engineering Services – 38 years

Gale Ogg

Street Maintenance – 36 years

Eric Ross

Street Maintenance – eight years

Gary Thalken

Wastewater – 13 years

PulsePoint

PulsePoint is a life-saving smartphone application that connects residents trained in CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) with those who suffer sudden cardiac arrest in public places. Lincoln is the first city to implement it not only in Nebraska, but in the four-state area, which includes Iowa, Kansas and Missouri.



“In sudden cardiac arrest, we know that time makes a huge difference – the sooner a person receives CPR, the greater his or her chances of survival and recovery,” said Mayor Chris Beutler at an Oct. 8 news conference. “That’s why we are pleased to bring this life-saving application to our community.”

The free PulsePoint application does not require setting up an account or providing an email address or other personal information. PulsePoint will provide those able and willing to respond with directions within a quarter-mile of their location.

“PulsePoint is designed to connect potential rescuers to victims in cardiac arrest in the crucial minutes before the first responders arrive, when life hangs in the balance and every moment counts,” said Interim Fire Chief Tim Linke. “PulsePoint is saving lives around the country, and I hope our example will encourage other agencies in the Midwest to explore its potential.”

More information is available at pulsepoint.org.



February 12 through 14, 2016

2016 Home and Garden Show
Lancaster Event Center

City of Lincoln is On The Move!

By Miki Esposito

Our mission is to responsibly deliver, enhance and maintain vital infrastructure and services for the good of our community.

Lincoln is a growing and thriving community, emerging nationally and recognized as a premier American city for businesses, entrepreneurs, young people, retirees and families. In the last 60 years, Lincoln’s population has grown by 140,287 people. In that same amount of time, the City went from 25.54 square miles to 92.74 square miles — a 263 percent increase! What that means for Public Works and Utilities is growing infrastructure and service demands in the future.

The best way to shape this future is to create it. This requires a strategic mindset aimed at continual improvement of vital infrastructure and services coupled with a sustainable and responsible approach to the management of public resources. Strategic thinking and planning in any organization is a critical process devoted to addressing challenges as well as pursuing improvement and success.

Over the past year, our Strategic Planning Team, made up of representatives from each division within the department, worked to create the 2020 VISION. It captures our Department’s direction, objectives, goals and actions to support the future of our great City and is aimed to better inform, engage and serve its citizens. When finalized this month, it will extend throughout the next five years (January 2016 to



The Strategic Planning Team combined hard work with Halloween fun at its October 31 meeting. From left, Nicole Fleck-Tooze, Donna Garden, Ben Higgins, Roger Figard, Miki Esposito and Victoria Keating.

December 2020) and is intended to be a living, breathing document that will be reviewed and updated regularly by Department staff.

With 2020 VISION in clear sight, I am confident about the future of the Public Works and Utilities Department. By working together, we will continue to realize great success.



WINTER WEATHER

As temperatures dip, it's time again to start thinking about winter weather and ways to be safe while driving. Street Maintenance will begin its second season of anti-icing operations. If you encounter an anti-ice tanker or a team of snowplows, please be respectful and only pass when it is safe to do so. Please do not follow the equipment or other drivers too closely. Help our crews do a better, quicker job by moving your car to an off-street location, especially during parking bans.



Fun fact:

In the City's 1915 annual report, snow from the intersections of streets in the business districts was hauled away in two yard loads at a cost of 25 cents per yard. During that season, 1,000 loads of snow were hauled away. According to historical state records, the 1914-15 season produced 59.4 inches of snow, with a record 23 inches in January 1915.

Visit lincoln.ne.gov (keyword: snow) for more information on the City's snow operations.

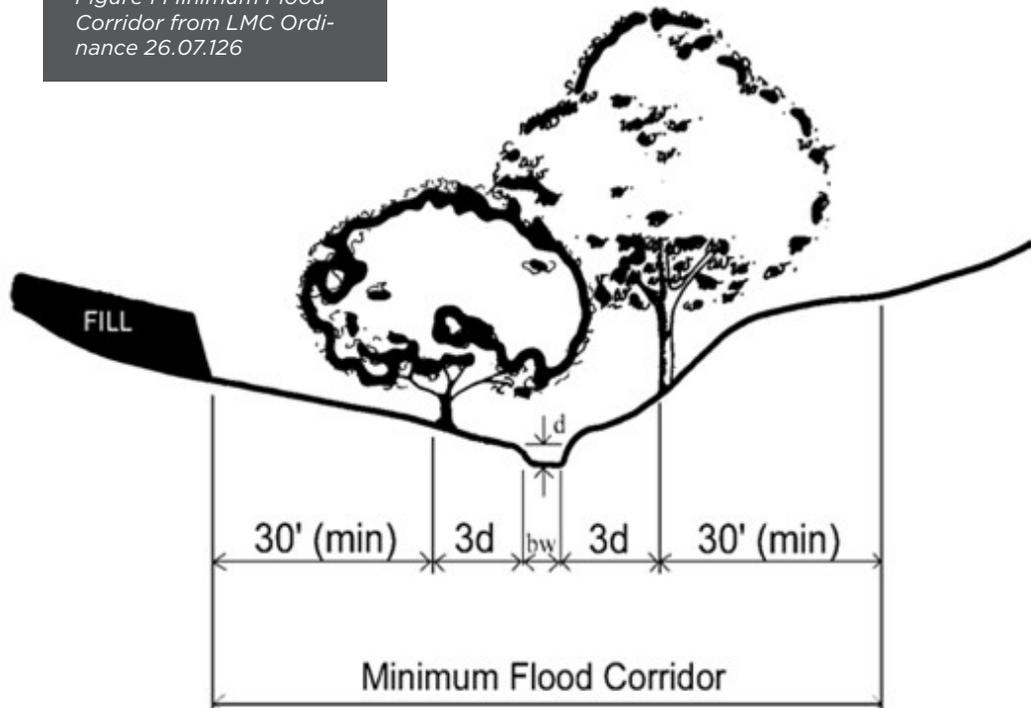
Open Space Reduced Local Flooding Damage

Heavy rain events in 2014 and 2015 and subsequent flooding in and near Lincoln have provided a greater understanding of the risk, magnitude and intensity of flooding near our local creeks, wetlands and low-lying areas. The abundance of open space and greenways, particularly along stream corridors and in the floodplain, played an important part in reducing flood damage with these recent events.

Local building code regulations limit the placement of buildings and fill in what is referred to as the "minimum flood corridor." The building of structures and depositing of fill in and along most established drainage ways that drain over 150 acres is regulated within a buffer of 60 feet or more along the local drainage ways (see Fig 1). If fill is allowed, it must be offset elsewhere to avoid downstream flooding impacts.

In addition to the minimum flood corridor, other spaces are specifically designed to allow floodwater to be stored. These areas include City and State parks, wetlands, ball fields, stormwater holding basins in homeowners associations and some conservation easements.

Figure 1 Minimum Flood Corridor from LMC Ordinance 26.07.126



Top Five Reasons...

...why people don't take CPR classes



1. I am all set – I took a CPR course three or four years ago.
2. I am not going to do mouth-to-mouth on a stranger.
3. I am not going to do CPR on a stranger. I will get sued.
4. A cardiac arrest is a matter of life or death.
5. I can't do CPR. I might break their ribs.

Learn the facts, and don't put off till tomorrow what you could do today. To register for CPR/AED classes, contact Victoria Keating at vkeating@lincoln.ne.gov or 402-441-7558. Protect yourself and your family.

THANK YOU DIRECTOR!

On behalf of all Public Works and Utilities employees, we would like to personally thank Miki Esposito for all of her hard work and her vision for our Department these past four years. Your kindness, warmth and generosity have given PWU a renewed outlook. We cannot thank you enough for being such a great leader. You will truly be missed, and we wish you the absolute best.

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Thank You!

The Marketing Committee would like to thank those employees who were able to join us at the employee appreciation event. We hope that you enjoyed the event and took the opportunity to speak with the benefit representatives in attendance.

Please feel free to follow up with any of these reps:

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Don't be a statistic. Call 811 before digging.

45 percent of American homeowners who plan to dig this year said in a recent survey that they **would NOT call 811 beforehand**, putting themselves and their communities at risk.

