

Message from the Manager:

If you follow much of my writing over the years, it comes as no surprise that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is one of my historical mentors. We celebrate Dr. King on the third Monday in January every year. It is a holiday that is meant to be an active day of celebration where we are called to serve each other! How fitting! Dr. King rose up and spoke out about civil rights during a time in our history where it was unacceptable and very dangerous to do so. He put his life on the line to serve others and to change the world for all of us. In his famous "I have a Dream" speech given at the Lincoln Memorial in 1963, Dr. King states "...that one day right down in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers." Dr. King therein painted a beautiful destination for us all. A destination we often have fallen short of, but one for which it is ever worth striving. Dr. King envisioned and painted his vision for us all of what unity looks like. Dr. King's life was spent striving to achieve that vision even through all the perils he faced. What I'd like us all to focus on, and another lesson we can learn from his life, is how he went about his mission – peacefully. Dr. King peacefully shook the United States to its core on civil rights. He achieved so much change in his tragically short life because his methods were so successful.

Dr. King once stated, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. Hate multiplies hate, violence multiplies violence, and toughness multiplies toughness in a descending spiral of destruction ... The chain reaction of evil - hate begetting hate, wars producing more wars - must be broken, or we shall be plunged into the dark abyss of annihilation." As a nation and a people, are we truly hearing the words that Dr. King spoke?

My heart has been heavy and weary for our Country. We have witnessed unrest all over the Country and from every possible political view point. One common theme among it all is the use of force to assert a belief – force of speech and often the force of action. Famous physicist Sir Isaac Newton's third law of motion states that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. While I think it also applies in terms of public interaction, it should be modified to "for every action there is an opposite but greater reaction." Cue up the story of the Hatfield and McCoy feud. Humans don't just react back with the same energy or hate thrown at them. They counter with greater energy or hate and the spiral that Dr. King so well spoke of begins.

The good news is Dr. King didn't just describe the human condition, he gave us the answer to our issues with each other. Dr. King's answer is simple, "Hate begets hate; violence begets violence; toughness begets a greater toughness. We must meet the forces of hate with the power of love." If we are to break the spiral the answer is not further violence. The answer is love.

So what does it mean to love others? We often think of love in terms of how we feel for our spouse, significant other or family. I challenge you to broaden your definition of love to that of a verb, or an action if you will. What are you actively doing to show others you care for them? It can be as small as a kind word that lifts the spirits of others. I know I have found that to be so true over this past year! Do you know someone in need that you can supply your knowledge or resources to assist? In doing these things you are applying the "love" that Dr. King spoke of.

We are blessed to be public servants because serving others is what we get to do every day. Don't let yourself get lost in the troubles of this world – look back through history they have always been with us! Focus on what you can impact and that is the lives of those around you that you can

serve. In doing that, you will spur others through your actions such that your service grows exponentially. Just like a ripple on a pond – it will stretch out much greater than just the acts you perform for others and through the actions of those you spur you will even benefit (love) people you have never met. What an amazing blessing we are to others when we do that! I am confident we are doing just that – impacting those with us now in the moment, those that are unseen by us, and those that will come after us. Thank you for allowing me to be a part of such a great team of servants!

David

“What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of men. That is what love looks like.” – Saint Augustine

Vision Statement: *Providing public services that empower people to focus on what matters most: their goals, hopes and dreams.*

General Updates:

COVID-19 Update: While we are hearing some positive news about hospitalizations for COVID-19, we are still in a level one risk category and should all continue to do our part to limit the speed of the virus’ spread. Members of our Police and Fire Departments, that wanted the vaccine, have been able to get the first shot this past month. We continue to have discussions with Seton about the availability of vaccines for our employees. Seton has been a wonderful partner with our City during this pandemic. We will keep you all posted once we have a date for possible vaccinations for those that so choose to take the vaccine. Keep being vigilant in your daily routines to limit the spread!

Welcome New Employees and Promotions: We welcome aboard the newest members of our team and congratulate those recently promoted:

New Employees:

Nicholas Olson - Firefighter/Paramedic – January 4th

Sarah Hoffman - Part Time Telecommunicator – January 6th

Courtney Fye - Building Official Secretary – January 13th

Neil Jordan San Juan – Senior Equipment Operator

Promotions:

Light Equipment Operator Henry Nash promoted to Crew Leader on January 23rd.

Promotions:

New Trash Service to Begin March 1: The City will transition to a new trash service on March 1. Our service will still be with Waste Management but will now be collected using provided 96 gallon carts and trucks that allow the driver to empty the cans using a hydraulic arm. This will be a major change for our citizens. If you hear concerns or questions please forward those to Public Works.

First Ever Disc Golf Tournament: The Parks Department will host the City’s first every Disk Golf Tournament at Purser Family Park this Saturday, January 30!

Recreational Classes Continue: Tae Kwon Do, Hapkido and Swordplay: Recreational Fencing classes continue with precautionary guidelines and procedures at the Recreation Center.

Youth Soccer: Youth Soccer starts this week with over 350 participants! Covid-19 policies and procedures from the Fall Seasons will apply.

PD Recognized as One of the Best: The PD was recognized by the Killeen Daily Herald as being One of the Best Police Stations in Central Texas in 2020!

9 PM Routine: The PD has initiated a “9PM Routine” to assist the community in remembering to lock up their cars and valuables at 9 p.m. every night. This is to help with the lowering the number of vehicle thefts.

Parks Staff Receive Certifications: Recreation Superintendent Jonathan Hanson and Recreation Coordinator Darrien Nicholas both received their Aquatic Facility Operator (AFO) certification from the National Recreation and Park Association. Congrats Jonathan and Darrien!

Spotlight on Service:

Adam Trujillo Serves: Service comes in internal and external forms. Adam Trujillo is the man behind most of the cities video presentations online. Adam provides outstanding internal service to all departments. He also provides outstanding external service by keeping our citizens engaged and informed on so many topics. Thank you Adam from the entire Admin Team!

Police Department Appreciated: The PD received a letter of appreciation from the United States Attorney’s Office for their dedication and commitment to the people in our community throughout the past year.

Justin Elliot, Mandy Jimenez, and Nicholas Olson Thanked: A patient contacted the FD to thank Firefighter/Paramedics Justin Elliot, Mandy Jimenez, and Nicholas Olson for the exceptional care they provided her.

Eric Alton Thanked: Finance thanked Eric Alton for being “extremely helpful.” The City just began to enforce late water fees that we put a hold on due to Covid-19. Finance stated Eric “has gone out his way to help us to make sure that the customers are taken care of.” Great job Eric!

Nate Nesbit Goes Above and Beyond: A citizen called to compliment Nate Nesbit at the transfer station. She said he always goes out of his way to help her and always has a positive attitude. She said she will be moving soon and wanted to let you know his outstanding customer service will be missed. Nate you represent us so well and are a great example of leadership!