

City Manager's Spotlight



From the desk of City Manager Teresa Wilson

CITY MANAGER'S SPOTLIGHT ON JANUARY/ FEBRUARY 2014

The purpose of the City Manager's Spotlight is to provide details about what is happening in the City and to stay connected with the community. The City Manager's Spotlight on January and February 2014, reflects information about operations during the winter storm, an update on the Police Chief Search and additional City highlights and accomplishments.

POLICE CHIEF SEARCH UPDATE

- Upon receipt from the Police Chief Search Committee and the City of Columbia's Human Resources Director, City Manager Teresa Wilson announced the candidates for the Columbia Police Chief. The format for this phase of the search process for the City of Columbia's Police Chief began on February 18, 2014. Four candidates were engaged in a 3-day assessment process that included the participation of the City Manager, the Police Chief Search Committee, Columbia Police Department staff, the Community Stakeholders Panel and the citizens of Columbia.



I remain committed to conducting a fair and transparent process that is open, engaging and inclusive. The collaborative efforts of our Search Committee and Community Stakeholders have been vital to this national search and I'm especially grateful for their time, diligence and dedication. Thanks to them, we have an amazing slate of candidates to consider. This position is critical to the future of our Capital City and one that I don't take lightly. I have no doubt that my decision will be difficult, but I will certainly use every ounce of information available to make the right choice for our citizens and communities.

~ City Manager Teresa Wilson

- The four candidates that participated in the assessment process included:

- Tony Fisher
- William Holbrook
- Bryan Norwood
- Gregory Reese



Please click [HERE](#) to view candidate profiles.

- A significant part of the process included a public forum that provided an opportunity for citizens to meet the candidates and submit questions for them to answer. During the forum, candidates responded to questions that were submitted by citizens. Representatives from the law enforcement community, neighborhood associations, faith community, business and hospitality communities were identified to actively participate. The Community Stakeholders Panel provided input and a collective voice for the community during the search process.

It was very important to me that our community had an opportunity to be involved in this process.

~ City Manager Teresa Wilson

WINTER WEATHER EMERGENCY OPERATIONS

- City Manager Teresa Wilson announced winter weather emergency preparedness operations on February 11, 2014. City of Columbia officials urged residents to closely monitor the weather forecasts and use extreme caution on the roadways during the winter storm.
- **911 CENTER**
 - Emergency Standby Status was activated for all CRC personnel. CRC 9-1-1 was staffed at appropriate staffing levels to accommodate the anticipated increased call volume. Adjustments to staffing levels were made as the weather dictated.
 - 911 calls were to be used for emergencies only. The number is active and monitored around the clock (24 hours a day/every day).
 - For non-emergency situations, citizens were asked to call 252-2911. This number is active and monitored around the clock (24 hours a day/ every day).

▪ **CUSTOMER CARE CENTER**

- The Customer Care Center operated on a 24-hour basis. Citizens were able to call 803-545-3300 for all non-emergency assistance during the winter storm.

▪ **COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT**

- During inclement weather, the City of Columbia Police Department's Assisting Columbia's Elderly Program (A.C.E) and Pro-Active Community Enforcement Unit (P.A.C.E.) made phone calls and checked on the program's most vulnerable citizens. For those senior citizens that called Columbia Police Department's front desk (545-3500) or 9-1-1 Communications (252-2911) for assistance, a police officer was dispatched for assistance to determine the degree of distress. When possible police officers notified designated relatives and / or friends to provide necessary assistance to the senior.



▪ **WARMING STATIONS**

- Warming Stations opened at 6 p.m. Tuesday, February, 11, 2014, and operated on a 24-hour basis as weather conditions were monitored. The "Warming Stations", located at Hyatt Park (950 Jackson Avenue) and Martin Luther King, Jr. Park (2300 Greene Street), were a courtesy service provided by the City of Columbia in order to provide a warm, comfortable environment for persons or families who needed access to additional heating sources during the freezing temperatures. The warming stations remained open during the entire winter storm period.

▪ **PUBLIC WORKS**

- The City of Columbia Public Works Department monitored the inclement weather and had staff on standby to respond when conditions warranted.
- All divisions took steps to ensure that vehicles and equipment were ready and crews were on standby to work as needed during the weather storm.
- Street Division mixed brine, sand and salt in preparation for the storm and began spraying road surfaces on February 11, 2014.
- Street Division crews started salting and sanding streets, bridges, fire department driveways and other priority locations as the forecast dictated.
- The Solid Waste Division monitored the forecast and made decisions on delaying collection as the situation developed. Crews were on stand-by to assist as needed with debris removal.
- Forestry and Beautification assisted with all non-power line related limb removal.



▪ **PUBLIC RELATIONS**

- Citizens were updated throughout the winter storm via the City’s website, social media, media relations and daily press briefings.
- Public Relations worked with all local media outlets to report updates regarding weather patterns, road conditions, delays in garbage collection schedule and notices regarding City closings.

NOTES OF APPRECIATION

- Please see below a letter the City of Columbia received from the South Carolina Department of Transportation regarding the winter storm operations.



February 19, 2014

Columbia City Council
City of Columbia
P.O. Box 147
Columbia, SC 29217

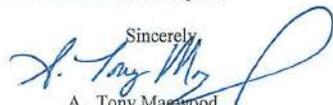
Re: Winter Storm Pax & Leon

Dear Mayor Benjamin and Members of City Council:

Too often good deeds of public professionalism and exemplary service of our public servants go unnoticed and unrecognized. The State of South Carolina and more specifically the Columbia Metropolitan area had two severe winter weather events in a two week period that tested the limits of governments to maintain our transportation infrastructure for the continuation of emergency services, law enforcement, and public utilities.

While emergency operations planning and logistics organization played a key role in our response, the citizens of Columbia and Richland County should be proud of the response from the Public Works arm of government. The men and women who provided round the clock essential services for clearing, deicing, and debris removal lessened the blow to both our infrastructure and our economy. The level of cooperation with the City of Columbia and the South Carolina Department of Transportation led to an unparalleled combination of forces and supplies.

As a stakeholder in providing outstanding service to our citizens and on behalf the Department, please join me in congratulating these individuals for their “outstanding performance” and an “excellent job”.

Sincerely

A. Tony Magwood
Resident Maintenance Engineer

cc: Christy Hall, Acting Secretary of Transportation, SCDOT
Teresa Wilson, City of Columbia
SCE&G Metro Columbia Utility Operations

Richland Maintenance
7201 Fairfield Road
Columbia, South Carolina 29203

Phone: (803) 789-0128
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AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER



STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT DIVISION COMPLETES INVESTIGATION OF THE COLUMBIA POLICE DEPARTMENT

- The following statement was issued immediately following the State Law Enforcement Division Investigation (SLED) press conference on Wednesday, February 25, 2014, regarding the investigation of the Columbia Police Department.



We Are Columbia

Office of the City Manager
1737 Main Street, Columbia, SC 29201 • Phone: 803-545-3026 • Fax: 803-545-3051

February 25, 2014

I am pleased that this investigation of the Columbia Police Department has come to a close. This has been a long process, but I understand that the length of time was necessary in order for the investigation to be thorough and comprehensive. As a city, we deserve to move forward and the men and women of the Columbia Police Department deserve clarity about the status of the investigation.

I have requested the full investigatory file from SLED Director Mark Keel. Once I have received the investigative file I, along with proper subject matter experts, executive staff and legal advisors will meet to review the file thoroughly to ensure that we have assessed all outcomes of the investigation process.

At this juncture, I cannot make any comments regarding next steps or the path forward until the file has been received and thoroughly reviewed by all pertinent parties.

I would like to thank Solicitor Wilkins, the FBI and Director Keel and his staff at SLED for all of their hard work during this investigation.

Thank you to City Council, City of Columbia staff and all of our citizens for your patience during this process. I appreciate your support and your confidence in the fact that I am committed to transparency, full disclosure and integrity in the Columbia Police Department and in all departments in the City of Columbia.

Thank you.

Teresa Wilson
City Manager

ColumbiaSC.net

BUDGET OFFICE



- The Budget & Program Management Office is proud to announce the launch of an interactive financial dashboard that offers an easy to use visualization of financial information using graphs and charts.



Click [HERE](#) to view the dashboard online.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Economic Development partners made presentations to Columbia City Council to report recent activities and accomplishments on behalf of the City as outlined in the “Strategic Plan for Economic Development.”
- Below are a few highlights of their presentations.
 - **Central South Carolina Alliance** announced 2013 projects totaling \$13 million in investment and 192 new jobs in Columbia.
 - **City Center Partnership** reported on 21 projects completed or under construction in the downtown area including: Agape Senior corporate headquarters; \$12 million Refresh project at the Marriott Hotel; BB&T Bank’s South Carolina headquarters relocation to Main Street; Certus Bank; First Citizens Café; First Community Bank; and repurposing of the Keenan Building. Banners are up on Main Street celebrating Kiplinger’s ranking Columbia as one of Americas “10 Great Places to Live”.
 - **Columbia World Affairs Council** is working with the newly appointed Honorary Ambassador to Ghana and West Africa on an economic development mission to Ghana this Spring. A business mission to Slovakia is planned for July that will have a focus on the automotive sector. The Council coordinated the February 6th visit of the Consul General of Japan for the opening of the Columbia Museum of Art’s ‘Japan and The Jazz Age’ exhibit.
 - **POSSCON/IT-oLogy** attracted more than 450 technologists, IT decision makers and educators from 16 states and 7 countries to Columbia for the annual open source

software conference. IT-oLogY serves as project manager of the CoursePower project (www.CoursePower.org), an initiative intended to allow every student graduating from USC, Columbia College, Benedict, and Midlands Tech a minor in Applied Computing, regardless of their major. This will give Columbia an incredible advantage over other areas in regard to workforce development.

- **EngenuitySC** held their annual Ignite! celebration which included an award of \$5,000 to MyLearningBlock, a digital educational start-up company founded by Richland One School District teacher, Brandon Gantt. The Fuel Cell Collaborative awarded \$75,000 to three USC student teams through the Fuel Cell Challenge V competition, NuHub hosted the 3rd annual international Small Modular Reactor conference in Columbia with over 650 combined attendees in partnership with England-based Nuclear Energy Insider. EngenuitySC launched a successful new program in partnership with Lower Richland High School's teachers, students and parents focusing on Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) education and their potential for careers in these four fields. Thus far, 20 programs have involved 3,690 students, 500 parents and almost 200 teachers. Sixteen additional programs are planned.
- **USC/Columbia Technology Incubator** reported 150 full and part time jobs currently in the facility representing 50 active companies; four companies graduated in June 2013 with seven additional companies scheduled for graduation in June 2014.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

- In the Month of February, the PACE Team worked on building organized Crime watches in designated communities like Canal Place off of Lucius Rd. Currently we have approx. 127 communities that are active and our goal for this year is to get to 150 community groups and crime watches.
- PACE officers are putting together agendas that will outline 12 months of crime prevention material so that education and awareness is the driving force for our crime stats remaining low.



- The department had an opportunity to test emergency preparedness during the storm. The staff was excellent and detailed with providing the necessary information for the City Manager to make the necessary decisions to keep our City prepared.
- The Police Department focused on Public Safety and responded to calls for assistance. The officers were trained and prepared for extended hours of operations during the winter storm.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

- City Council approved a contract that will permit Planning and Development Services to begin working with a consultant to update the City's Land Use Plan and rewrite the Zoning Ordinance. Goals of this significant project include, among others:



- Produce a Zoning Ordinance & Land Development Regulations that are clear, user-friendly, adaptable, and easy to understand to include, at a minimum, clear and concise language and inclusion of graphics to illustrate the Code, where appropriate.
- Clarify, streamline, and provide certainty to the development review process.
- Preserve, protect, and enhance existing neighborhoods while including provisions for high-quality and compatible in-fill and redevelopment projects.
- Incorporate regulations that provide for the wise use of resources.
- Invest authority with staff and reduce requirements for Board and Commission review to streamline processes.
- Encourage the reuse of existing buildings and infrastructure.
- Decrease reliance on design guidelines to implement plan recommendations.
- Achieve a balance of land uses for current and projected needs.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with your concerns, suggestions and hopes for our City. I take pleasure in my service to each of you!

All my best,



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