

in this issue >>>

- Geotechnical Assessment Conducted at Riverfront Park
- CEZ, Inc. Receives Excellence in Economic Development Award
- Columbia Fire Department Hosts 20th Annual Fire Prevention Week & Parade
- 2016 Domestic Violence Awareness Campaign

Oct.
2016



and more >>>

City Manager's **Spotlight**



TERESA WILSON
COLUMBIA CITY MANAGER

City Manager Selected to Participate in Engaging Local Government Leaders Conference

City Manager Teresa Wilson was selected to participate in the ELGL Pop-Up Conference on Friday, October 21 in Durham, North Carolina. The City Manager was featured in the panel discussion "#13percent: The Power of Diverse Leadership."

During the panel discussion, attendees learned how to overcome obstacles and create visibility as they chart their careers. This session also provided attendees with practical career and leadership advice as greater diversity and inclusion in local government leadership is being worked towards.

Ms. Wilson was accompanied by Dr. Patricia Mitchell, Assistant Secretary for Rural Economic Development and former County manager & Economic Developer for the N.C. Department of Commerce and Martha Paige, Town Manager of Morrisville, NC.

ELGL is a professional association for local government employees and public service partners. ELGL has over 1000 members across the country in positions ranging from city managers and planners to IT directors and communication officers.



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CEZ, Inc. Receives Excellence in Economic Development Award from the International Economic Development Council



Council members commended CEZ Inc. and Public and Media Relations staff for their work on the project and for receiving an international award for the Economic Development Week publicity campaign. Pictured: Columbia City Council members, CEZ, Inc. Board Members, CEZ and PR staff.

The Columbia Empowerment Zone, Inc. partnered with the City of Columbia to celebrate Economic Development Week. The City of Columbia Public and Media Relations Department heavily promoted the week and activities via print media, e-mail, website, social media and City TV. Public and Media Relations created a buzz about economic development by using Tumblr, Facebook, YouTube, press releases and Pinterest. There was local media coverage via TV, newspaper and magazine articles.

Mayor Benjamin and State Senator Scott read proclamations recognizing, May 8-14, 2016 as “Economic Development Week”, and 2016 as “The Year of the Economic Developer” and honoring the 90th anniversary of IEDC. In conjunction with the week of celebration, CEZ, Inc. launched the Vacant / Abandoned Building Incentive Program (VABIP) to encourage building reuse, promote revitalization and economic development. The VABIP was used as a tool to help create and retain jobs in the City and improve the appearance. IEDC’s Excellence in Economic Development Awards recognize the world’s best economic development programs and partnerships, marketing materials, and the year’s most influential leaders. These awards honor organizations and individuals for their efforts in creating positive change in urban, suburban, and rural communities.

About the International Economic Development Council

The International Economic Development Council (IEDC) is a non-profit membership organization serving economic developers. With more than 4,700 members, IEDC is the largest organization of its kind. Economic developers promote economic well-being and quality of life for their communities, by creating, retaining, and expanding jobs that facilitate growth, enhance wealth and provide a stable tax base. From public to private, rural to urban, and local to international, IEDC’s members are engaged in the full range of economic development experience. Given the breadth of economic development work, our members are employed in a wide variety of settings including local, state, provincial and federal governments, public-private partnerships, chambers of commerce, universities and a variety of other institutions. IEDC’s members create high quality jobs, develop vibrant communities and improve the quality of life in their regions. www.iedcONLINE.org.

About Columbia Empowerment Zone Inc.

CEZ, Inc. is a nonprofit economic development corporation whose mission is to efficiently, effectively and enthusiastically create and support economic development opportunities in the City of Columbia. They achieve this mission by ensuring activities create, retain and reinvest wealth in our community. The guiding principles and values are: accountability, integrity, inclusion, outcomes and stewardship.

The Columbia Empowerment Zone Inc. of Columbia, SC received a Bronze Excellence in Economic Development Award for its 2016 project in the category of Economic Development Week from the International Economic Development Council (IEDC).

The honor was presented at an awards ceremony on Sept., 27, during the IEDC Annual Conference, which was held in Cleveland, OH. A presentation followed during the City Council meeting on Oct. 18.

“On behalf of the IEDC board of directors and Excellence in Economic Development Awards Advisory Committee, congratulations to Columbia Empowerment Zone. Not only did they work to provide a necessary service to their community; but also, their participation in the awards program sheds light on their stellar projects which other communities can now use as a benchmark.”

~Barry Matherly, CECD, FM, IEDC 2016 Board Chair, President & CEO of the Greater Richmond Partnership

The Columbia Fire Department Hosts 20th Annual Fire Prevention Week and Parade

The Columbia Fire Department's mission this year for Fire Prevention Week is to remind our citizens "Don't Wait-Check the Date! Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years." Unfortunately, many home fire deaths are a result from fires where a smoke alarm is present but does not operate. **Having a working smoke alarm in the home reduces the risk of dying in a fire by 50%!**

Does your home have a smoke alarm? According to the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA), the answer is likely yes: NFPA research shows that most American homes have at least one. But do you know how old your smoke alarms are? If you're like most people, you're probably not so sure.

A recent survey conducted by NFPA revealed that only a small percentage of people know how old their smoke alarms are, or how often they need to be replaced. That lack of awareness is a concern for the Columbia Fire Department and NFPA, along with fire departments throughout the country, because smoke alarms don't last forever.

"Time and again, I have seen the life-saving impact smoke alarms can have in a home fire, but I have also seen the tragedy that can result when smoke alarms aren't working properly. That is why we are making a concerted effort to educate our residents about the overall importance of smoke alarms, and acknowledge that they do have limitations."

~Aubrey D. Jenkins, Columbia Fire Chief

As the official sponsor of Fire Prevention Week for more than 90 years, NFPA and the Columbia Fire Department are promoting this year's Fire Prevention Week campaign, "Don't Wait - Check the Date! Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years," to better educate the public about the critical importance of knowing how old their smoke alarms are and replacing them once they're 10 years old. Fire Prevention Week was held October 9-15, 2016.

To find out how old your smoke alarm is and its expiration date, simply look on the back of the alarm where the date of manufacture is marked. The smoke alarm should be replaced 10 years from that date (not the date of purchase). The Columbia Fire Department also says smoke alarms should be tested monthly, and that batteries should be replaced once a year or when they begin to chirp, signaling that they are running low.

For more information on smoke alarms and this year's Fire Prevention Week campaign, "Don't Wait: Check the Date! Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years," visit www.firepreventionweek.org.

The Columbia Fire Department (CFD) hosted the 20th Annual Fire Prevention Parade on Monday, October 3, 2016 at the corner of Laurel and Main Street, ending at the corner of Main and Gervais Street.

The purpose of this annual event is to bring awareness to the Fire Prevention Week theme, "Don't Wait - Check the Date! Replace Smoke Alarms Every 10 Years."

Following the parade, participants were served lunch at the CFD Headquarters located at 1800 Laurel Street.



2016 Domestic Violence Awareness Campaign



Mayor Steve Benjamin, Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine, and the City of Columbia staff held a press conference on Wednesday, September 14, 2016 to announce the new Initiatives for the 10th Anniversary of the Mayor's Walk Against Domestic Violence. Due to severe inclement weather from Hurricane Matthew, the city rescheduled the walk for Saturday, October 29, 2016.

According to the Violence Policy Center South Carolina is ranked fifth in the nation for women killed by men. The Mayor's Walk Against Domestic Violence brings awareness to the community and allows everyone to take action against domestic violence.

2016 Mayor's Walk Against Domestic Violence Photo Gallery



2016 Purple Ambassadors - The purple ambassadors are active citizens of Columbia, who serve as messengers for the Mayor's Walk Against Domestic Violence.

- ◆ Chandra Cleveland-Jennings
- ◆ Dwight Galloway
- ◆ Kiwan Fitch
- ◆ James Shadd
- ◆ Tina Torres
- ◆ Elizabeth Gray

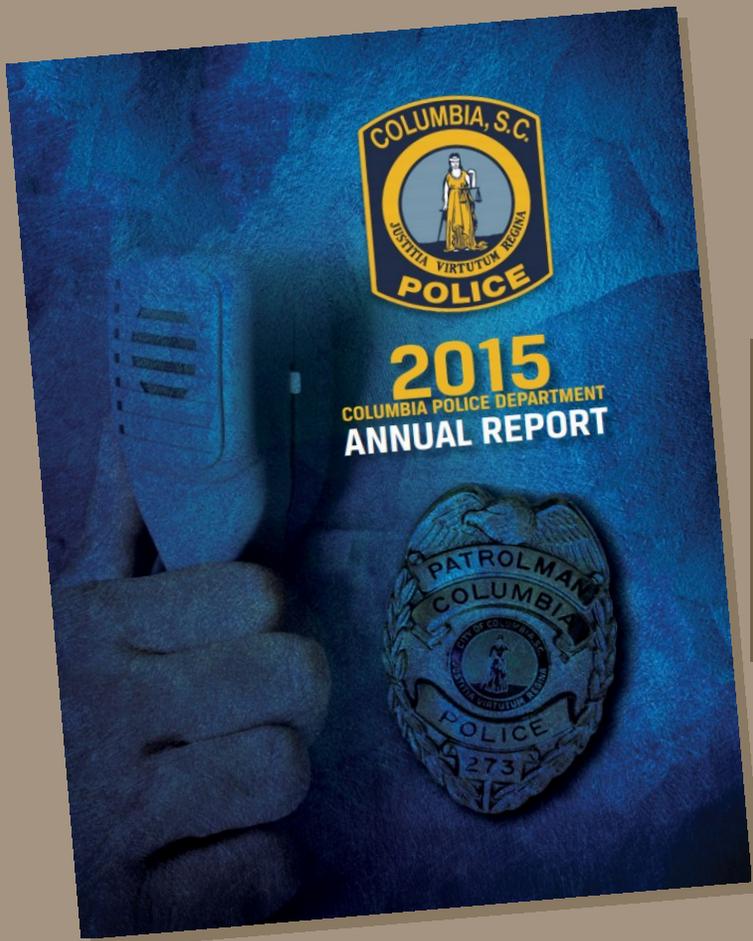
Domestic Violence Taskforce - The purpose of this board is to review strategies and creative ways to address the issue of Criminal Domestic Violence within the City of Columbia.

- ◆ Councilwoman Tameika Isaac Devine, Co-Chairperson
- ◆ Nancy Barton, Co-Chairperson
- ◆ Jan Nobles
- ◆ Lorenzo Katio
- ◆ Darrell Kershaw
- ◆ Le'Shunn White
- ◆ Linda Huggins
- ◆ Demetria Capone

Sistercare Toiletry Drive held by the City and Staples

The City of Columbia along with Staples Supplies held a toiletry drive on Thursday, October 27, 2016. This event was held as a result of the Purple Partnership with Staples during the month of October. Citizens of Columbia came out to support Domestic Violence Awareness Month and gave an abundance of toiletry supplies that will be donated to Sistercare.

Columbia Police Department Releases 2015 Annual Report



The Columbia Police Department's 2015 Annual Report highlights significant events and achievements during the year. It also provides an overview of the outstanding work of CPD employees working in the Department's Bureaus, Divisions and Units and outlines some of the partnerships we have forged to make Columbia safer and CPD an exceptional police department.

In 2015, the Columbia Police Department continued to transform into a model of 21st century policing. The 2015 Annual Report illustrates their focus on crime, our community and our police officers.

"Although the Columbia Police Department has achieved much during the last year, we know our work is never done. We will continue to measure our progress, report achievements and celebrate the exemplary work of the fine men and women of the Columbia Police Department. And with your support, we will continue to establish new partnerships to address emerging crime problems, take care of our officers and maintain the trust and confidence of our citizens."

~William H. "Skip" Holbrook, Chief of Police

To view the 2015 Annual Report, visit www.ColumbiaPD.net.

City Receives Bond Rating Upgrade from Standard & Poor's

The City of Columbia is currently issuing a water and sewer system revenue bond in the amount of \$246 million. During the process, city staff and city advisors held credit rating discussions with Moody's Investor Services and S&P Global Ratings. Moody's reaffirmed its Aa1 rating and S&P raised the city's rating from AA to AA+. According to S&P, the rating reflects the combination of an extremely strong enterprise risk profile and a very strong financial risk profile.

The enterprise risk profile reflects their view of the system's:

- Strong, broad and diverse service area economy, as the Columbia metropolitan statistical area (MSA) continues to perform very well;
- Low and affordable rates for service, which is credit positive as it provides the city with rate-raising flexibility to implement its large capital improvement plan (CIP); and
- Good operational management practices and policies, indicating that the water and sewer utility--despite the regulatory requirements--is generally in good condition.



The financial risk profile is supported by, in their opinion:

- Very strong debt service coverage (DSC) and liquidity; and
- Strong financial management, with internal financial controls and best practices that are supportive of consistently strong credit quality.

Reviewing records back to 1993, we have found that this S&P rating is the highest attained by the City of Columbia.

City Council Proclaims October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month



Each year, the City of Columbia recognizes Domestic Violence Awareness Month with the annual Mayor's Walk Against Domestic Violence. On Tuesday, October 18, 2016 City Council presented a proclamation to the president of Sistercare Nancy Barton proclaiming October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

Sistercare is an organization that provides services for victims of domestic violence, and the only organization that specifically offers shelter and support services for survivors and their children.

Sistercare shelters and support services are provided in the counties listed below:

- Richland County
- Lexington County
- Kershaw County
- Newberry County
- Fairfield County

The City of Columbia will continue to support Sistercare for all of the diligent work that is provided for victims of domestic violence across the Midlands. For more information please contact Public and Media Relations at 803-545-3020.

Geotechnical Assessment Conducted at Riverfront Park

Guests of Riverfront Park had limited access to the park's walking trail in October while crews conducted an assessment of damages to the Columbia Canal embankment, the City's Parks and Recreation Department announced.

The assessment will continue Thursday, November 3, 2016 through Wednesday, November 16, 2016, and the North entrance located at 4122 River Drive will be closed. Guests must enter the park at South entrance located at 312 Laurel Street. During this time, guests are encouraged to proceed with caution when using the trail and should not enter the restricted areas.

Maps will be located at information kiosks in the park to provide updates on restricted areas as the assessment progresses.

For more information, please call the Parks and Recreation Department at 803-545-3100.



About Teresa Wilson

Teresa Wilson is the City Manager for the City of Columbia, SC. For more details on the City Manager, visit ColumbiaSC.net/City-Manager. For more information about the City of Columbia, visit ColumbiaSC.net.

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,

Teresa Wilson

