

DATE: December 20, 2024
TO: Mayor and City Council Members
FROM: Tom Whitmer, Acting City Manager
SUBJECT: Acting City Manager's Bi-Weekly Management Report



Cottonwood Police Department

Cottonwood Police Department Staffing Update

We are excited to announce three well-deserved promotions within the Cottonwood Police Department. Congratulations to Commander Kevin Murie, Sergeant Damon Truax, and Officer Rafael Fimbres. We look forward to the positive impact you'll continue to make in our community.



Public Works

The City of Cottonwood Provides Free Christmas Tree Disposal

The City of Cottonwood will accept Christmas trees for disposal at no charge from December 26, 2024, to January 31, 2025. Trees can be dropped off at the City's reclaimed water fill station, located next to the Public Works facility at 1480 W. Mingus Avenue. The drop-off site is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Please follow the signs along Mingus Avenue to locate the site. Remember to remove all lights and decorations from the trees before disposal.

Cottonwood Area Transit (CAT)

Cottonwood Area Transit Receives Additional Operating and Preventative Funding

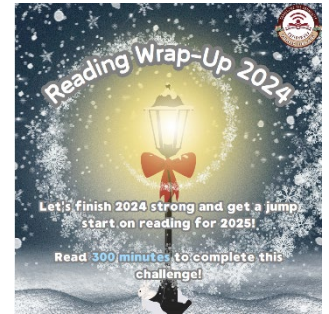
The City of Cottonwood requested additional funding for operating expenses and preventative maintenance for the second year of the 2022 5311 grant cycle. The Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT) agreed to the request for operating funds but did not approve the request for preventative maintenance funding. It was clear to

ADOT that the City has been facing significant increases in operating costs due to limited resources, rising labor costs, and a general price increase. As a result, the City was awarded an additional \$233,494.63 in operating funds.

Parks, Recreation, Library

Reading Wrap Up 2024

Join the Cottonwood Public Library for an exciting reading challenge beginning on December 23, 2024. Finish 2024 strong and get a head start on your reading for 2025. To complete this challenge, you need to read for a total of 300 minutes. Register now on the Beanstack app and start reading on December 23, 2024. Please note that the last day to log your reading minutes is January 5, 2025. If you have any questions, please contact (928) 634-7559.



New Year's Eve Celebration

We are excited to share there will be even more fun, free activities planned for the upcoming New Year's Eve Celebration on December 31, 2024, at the Cottonwood Recreation Center. These activities will be available at the event from 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m., with our balloon drop to follow at 10:00 p.m. We will have Trenzas Braid Bar doing hair tinsel and simple braids. Adventure Royal LLC Nerf Battle Arena will set up a Nerf arena in our gymnasium for all to enjoy. DJ D Bear will be playing music throughout the evening. There will also be face painting, and the indoor pool will be open for swimming from 7:00 p.m. - 9:30 p.m. Remember, we will also enjoy holiday movies, pizza, hot cocoa, popcorn, cotton candy, and much more. Bring out the entire family for a fun evening at the Cottonwood Recreation Center. We'd also like to say a huge Thank You to Walmart Cottonwood for your donation and support of this event each year.



Senior Tree

The Cottonwood Public Library thanks the community for generously filling over 50 tags for the Senior Tree in partnership with the Verde Valley Caregivers Association.

The Community Angel Tree

The Cottonwood Parks & Recreation Department would like to sincerely thank everyone who participated in this year's Christmas Angel program. Thanks to the support of the Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District and our amazing community, we fulfilled over fifty angel tags for local children and families who needed extra assistance this holiday season.



These programs highlight the spirit of giving that defines our community. They emphasize our community service teams' important role in bringing joy and support to those who need it most during the holidays. Thank you for helping to make this season brighter for so many.

Breakfast with Santa

The Cottonwood Parks and Recreation Department would like to extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to making this past Saturday's Breakfast with Santa a memorable success. Approximately 300 attendees enjoyed both pictures with Santa and a delicious breakfast.

We would like to offer a special thank you to the Cottonwood Fire Department for preparing the meal and to the Cottonwood Police Department for their wonderful assistance with decorations. We are also very grateful to VERVE Events, Jennifer Griffin, and Walmart for their generous donations that made this event possible. Additionally, we appreciate the support of the Cottonwood Youth Advisory Commission for staffing the event and ensuring a memorable experience for all families who participated. A heartfelt thanks also goes to the Desert Star Choir for entertaining us with Christmas carols during the event.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge our dedicated Council Members Joy Mosley, Bob Marks, and Felicia Coates who took time out of their weekend to support and serve alongside us. Your involvement made this event even more meaningful for our community. Thank you for helping to create a magical morning filled with holiday cheer for families in Cottonwood.



Human Resources

GEM Card Recognitions

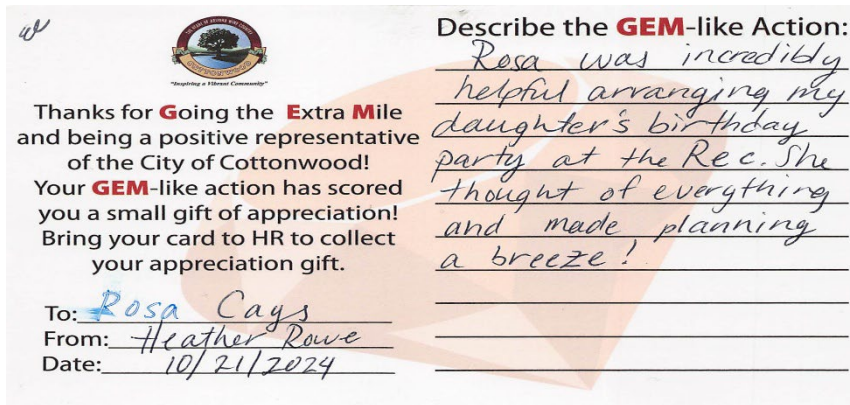
See an employee **Going The Extra Mile** or performing a **GEM**-like action? **Recognize them!**

Show your appreciation for your peers by filling out a **GEM** Card to explain why a particular employee deserves recognition. Once you have completed the card, present it to your colleagues in person and let them know how much you value their actions or work. After you express your support for their positive contributions, the employee can take the card to HR to redeem their gift.

The following employees received a **GEM** Card from their peers.

Rosa Cays, Customer Service and Reservations Specialist

“Rosa was incredibly helpful in arranging my daughter’s birthday party at the Rec. She thought of everything and made planning a breeze!” Submitted by Heather Rowe, Management Analyst, on October 21, 2024.



Volunteer and Employee Appreciation Event

On Friday, December 6, 2024, the City celebrated its employees and volunteers at its annual appreciation event. Thank you to the A Team for hosting this event and coordinating its set-up, Jak Teel and John Stabe for setting up the audio/video set-up, John Stabe for creating our videos celebrating our award winners, and Laura Herrera for being our official photographer. Additionally, thank you to Colleen Gilboy at the Verde Valley Fair Grounds for opening up her facility to the City’s use. It was a great event for all who attended.

Congratulations to all employees receiving service awards. The following employees reached milestone years in 2024:

5 years

- Liz Gooslin - Library
- Judge Catherine Kelley - Court
- Alexander Matthews - Communications
- Amber Presmyk- Communications
- Christine Sealey- Police
- Brittany Jacobs- Communications

10 years

- Jeff Cook - Finance
- Jamie Hausaman - Fire
- Rodrigo Ojeda - Fire
- Matthew Strickland - Police

15 years

- Clint Combs – Police
- Jeremy Doerksen – Fire
- Ryan Gibson - Police
- Richard Hicks - Police
- Sean James - Fire
- Ben Kramer – Fire
- Alex Lewis - Fire
- Jennifer Noss – Communications

- Corby Rice – Police
- Aaron Scott - Police
- Bryan Smith - Fire

20 years

- Debbie Bretkreutz – Utilities
- Troy Hoke - Fire
- Michael Montgomery - Fire
- Kevin Murie - Police

25 years

- Richard Contreras – Fire
- Rudy Rodriguez - Administration

30 years

- Larry Dawson - Fire

Congratulations to our annual award winners! At the event, we announced the 2023 annual award nominees and winners.

2023 Teams of the Year

- Community Development and the A Team – Co-winners

2023 Employee of the Year

- Gary Davis – Winner
- Jim Wixom - Nominee

2023 Supervisor of the Year

- Amanda Wilber- Winner
- Javier Anguiano – Nominee
- Scott Ellis – Nominee
- Tami Mayes - Nominee

Congratulations to all and thank you all for your continued service. We would not be able to deliver our exceptional services without all of your dedication and hard work. We appreciate all you do.

If you missed the event, the Wastewater Department has initiated a lip sync challenge for all departments. See their throw-down video below. Photos and videos of all award winners are also below.

[Click Here For Employee of The Year!](#)



[Click Here For Supervisor of The Year!](#)



[Click Here For Team of The Year!](#)



[Click Here For The Holiday Slide Show!](#)



You can view the Wastewater's Lip Syn Video by [clicking here](#) or scanning the QR code.



If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you.

Tom Whitmer
Acting City Manager