CITY OF MYRTLE BEACH: A YEAR IN REVIEW

Significant Departmental Accomplishments
Fiscal Year 2018-19
Greetings!

On behalf of the entire Myrtle Beach City Council and the 900-plus employees who serve this community, we are pleased to present this “Year in Review” for Fiscal Year 2018-19. This document provides a department-by-department compilation of the accomplishments of our organization from July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019.

We recognize that you all work very hard for your money, and it is only appropriate that we provide this report to summarize the specific services and accomplishments that you received in return. I hope you will agree that this is an impressive list of achievements.

Council thanks the dedicated men and women of the city staff who made these achievements possible. I would also like to thank you, our community residents, property owners, business people and volunteers, for your support and encouragement along the way.

If you have questions about this report, please feel free to call City Hall at 843-918-1012. We look forward to speaking with you and to sharing an even brighter future. We live in an incredible community and, working together, there is no limit to what we can accomplish.

Sincerely,

Brenda Bethune
Mayor
Significant Departmental Accomplishments
Fiscal Year 2018-19

The employees of the City of Myrtle Beach are a diverse group of individuals who blend their unique talents to create the most effective, elite team of public servants in South Carolina.

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Construction Services Department

The Construction Services Department has the primary responsibility for ensuring the health, safety and well-being of all permanent residents and tourists through the proactive enforcement of building and trade codes. Department staff have earned 75 International Code Council (ICC) certifications.

Permit Services and Issued Permit Totals

- The department provided staff support to the Property Maintenance Hearings and the Standard Code Board of Adjustments and Appeals.
- Department collected a total of $2,287,918 in permit and plan review fees.
- The collective valuation of residential work in the city totaled $209,555,657.
- The collective valuation of commercial work in the city totaled $130,463,567.
- Total of 141 “No Fee” Permits were dispensed to both residential and commercial customers.
- Here are the distributed permit totals for the fiscal year:
  - 26 Residential Demolition Permits
  - 530 New Single-Family Construction Permits
  - 576 Residential Utility and Site Work Permits
  - 48 Residential Addition Permits
  - 628 Miscellaneous Residential Permits
  - Six Commercial Demolition Permits
  - 40 New Commercial Construction Permits
  - 43 Commercial Utility and Site Work Permits
  - 251 Miscellaneous Commercial Permits
  - 1,122 Electric Permits
  - 544 Fuel and Gas Permits
  - 1,274 HVAC Permits
  - 679 Certificates of Occupancy
  - 155 Fire Permits
  - 19 Light and Glare Permits
  - 12 Awning Permits
  - 254 Fence Permits
  - 13 Mobile Home Permits
  - 840 Plumbing Permits
  - 327 Roofing Permits
  - 249 Sign Permits
  - 71 Swimming Pool Permits

Property Maintenance and Building Inspections

- The property maintenance team enforced the International Property Maintenance Code and Chapter 10 of the City of Myrtle Beach Code of Ordinances, Health and Sanitation through investigative efforts.
- The department handled 490 property maintenance cases over the course of the fiscal year, with the Property Maintenance Hearing board reviewing each case.
- The building inspections team inspected projects for code compliance and investigated complaints of working without permits.
- Preceding construction work, the department managed 644 commercial plan reviews and 1,512 residential plan reviews.
- During the same period, the team conducted 15,487 building inspections.
- As a result of findings, the department issued 78 “stop work” orders due to safety issues and compliance failure.
- The building inspection team also performed damage assessments after Hurricane Florence.

**Downtown Redevelopment Corporation**

During Fiscal Year 2018-19, the Downtown Redevelopment Corporation staff initiated and facilitated revitalization of Myrtle Beach’s central business district through the following actions.

**Downtown Redevelopment Efforts/Improvement Projects**

- The DRC participated in the selection and management of Benchmark Consultants to ultimately provide a complete Downtown Master Plan that was adopted unanimously by City Council on March 12, 2019.
- The DRC provided funding of $81,970 for the Downtown Master Plan and serves as Project Management Lead for implementation of the Downtown Master Plan.
- On behalf of the city, the DRC acquired three Main Street Properties for renovation and conversion into a performing arts center in partnership with Coastal Carolina University.
- The DRC implemented use of Motionloft Pedestrian/Vehicle Counters in September 2019. The data collection will be used in partnership with other businesses to understand and track pedestrian and vehicle counts within the downtown area.

**Financial incentives in partnership with the City of Myrtle Beach to attract development/redevelopment**

- The DRC worked with City Council and staff to achieve state designation of Historic District(s) to qualify for Historic Tax Credits; inclusion on the National Register is expected this fall.
- The DRC helped identify and promote Opportunity Zones (506 and 507 Tract) for future investments.
The DCR continued to offer the Storefront Façade Grant Program to help businesses in the district refresh the building appearance.

Activation of Outdoor Spaces

- In partnership with the city and local merchants, the DRC implemented two successful three-day events in the downtown area, both of which drew thousands of people to the Burroughs & Chapin Pavilion Place.
  - Myrtle Beach Seafood Festival
  - Myrtle Beach Food Truck Festival

Beautification Efforts

- With funding from local sources, the DRC refreshed and rededicated Nance Plaza. The work included a new curb cut, new signage, a fence, additional electrical outlets and lighting and a rededication ceremony.
- Along Ocean Boulevard, the DRC worked with city staff to provide 100-plus hanging baskets filled with flowers. The baskets stretch from 21st Avenue North to Fourth Avenue North.

Parking Improvements

- The DRC, as the city’s parking management designee, continued its investment in advanced technology to provide better service and convenience for customers.
- Additional equipment at the Myrtle Beach Parking Office eased the in-person application process for residential parking decals.
- As part of citywide parking rebranding efforts, Myrtle Beach Parking staff and vehicles received new logos, all yellow curbs, white-lined spaces and green dots were repainted. The parking improvements included new, easier to understand beach access and parking signage.
- On behalf of the city, the DRC continued its management and yearly audit of the Hybrid Parking Program. City Council renewed the lease agreements in May 2019.

Economic Development Initiatives

- The DRC and City of Myrtle Beach hosted the Myrtle Beach Opportunity Zone Forum for interested investors.
- The DRC hosted a Technology Social and Innovator Social, which led to further enthusiastic discussions.
- City Council then created the Technology Advisory Group, which is working to create a new co-working and tech hub on Ninth Avenue North.
Financial Management & Reporting Department

The Financial Management and Reporting team coordinated and monitored the city’s budget, oversaw debt planning and compliance and managed the city’s finances. During Fiscal Year 2018-19, the department accomplished the following goals.

Reports

- Received the city’s 31st consecutive Certificate of Achievement Award for Excellence in Financial Reporting from the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA). The annual award is given in recognition of the team’s outstanding Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.
- The department also created the Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR), which serves as an abridged, easy-to-understand version of the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.
- The PAFR conveys the highlights of the city’s financial position, activity and accomplishments, without the use of jargon found in accounting and finance documents.
- Received an “unqualified opinion” on an independent audit for the previous fiscal year, which states the city’s financial records have been well maintained in accordance with all General Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and standards.
- The “unqualified opinion” is the highest rating and report an entity can receive through the audit process.

Additional Accomplishments

- Coordinated with all departments within the city organization to create a budget proposal.
- The department presented a balanced budget for Fiscal Year 2019-20.
- Worked with the Police and Public Information Departments to develop and deploy an application on the city’s website for Coyote Reporting due to community concerns.

Financial Services Department

During the fiscal year, the Financial Services Department provided service in procurement, business licensing, utility billing and residential parking decals. Here is a brief list of the team’s end-of-year highlights.

Business License

- The department mailed 10,829 business license renewal forms in March, which is an increase of 116 from the previous fiscal year.
- Worked with Public Information Department to launch new webpage that features updates of new business licenses issued; the documentation is provided monthly.
• Collaborated with a local printing company to print annual business license renewal forms offsite, making the process more cost efficient.
• The renewal forms featured color; multiple renewal forms with the same business name and mailing address are combined in one envelope, streamlining the process.
• The changes save public money on postage costs, while simultaneously modernizing the look and process.

**Purchasing and Procurement**

• Purchasing team received a 100% score from the city’s independent auditor for the third year in a row.
• The independent auditor conducted random checks of inventory items to ensure the physical count maintained in the inventory system matched the physical count.
• The department’s purchasing team maintained seven warehouse locations, with more than 950 inventory line items.
• Amended and updated the City of Myrtle Beach’s purchasing code, changing the dollar threshold during the formal solicitation process and provided a process for small purchases.
• Department directors now have authorization to act as purchasing agents for purchases of up to $7,500.
• The new policy requires a formal solicitation process for purchases in excess of $25,000.
• In January, the department hosted its annual “How to Business with the City” event, which serves as an educational procurement workshop for small businesses.
• The event provided valuable information to businesses seeking to become possible vendors and/or contractors for local government organizations.
• The annual event encourages a better understanding of the procurement process within the local business community, which ultimately provides more competition for the city’s procurement efforts; ultimately, competition drives up the quality of products and/or services delivered, ensuring a better value of the investment of the public’s money.

**Utility Billing Services**

• During Fiscal Year 2018-19, the department began Phase I of the Automated Meter Information (AMI) System project, which replaced large water meters that measure water usage more accurately.
• The AMI System now allows the city to read water meters remotely and interfaces with the utility billing system.
• The billing system now directly receives meter readings via an electronic file.
• Ultimately, the AMI System provides usage information faster, minimizes meter misreads and provides a tool to detect possible leaks between billing cycles.
• Collaborated with local printing company to update the look and efficiency of utility billing statements, which are printed off-site.
• The simplified statements are easier to read, and they provide space for a monthly message to be added to communicate with customers without an additional insert needed, saving money and cutting waste.
• The more convenient process combines customers’ bills who pay for utility services at multiple addresses, which saves the previous postage costs and prevents additional paper waste.
• During the fiscal year, utility customers elected to contribute $45,540 to the R.A.I.N. (Remembering Animals in Need) program which benefits the Grand Strand Humane Society.

Miscellaneous Financial Services

• The department created and hired a new Financial Services Manager position to oversee the business license and revenue (utility billing) divisions.
• In Fiscal Year 2018-19, the department accepted and mailed more than 3,550 residential parking decals to residents using the online parking decal registration system.
• The 2019-20 Residential Parking Decal period began in March 2019.

Fire Department

During the year, the Myrtle Beach Fire Department set and attained the goal of improving community relations and outreach. The team enhanced relationships within the city organization and with the public. Below is a list of the department’s outstanding accomplishments.

Communication, Education and Outreach Initiatives

• The Fire Department planned and hosted the first annual session of the Citizens Fire Academy.
• Department hosted the first media educational fire school.
• Accommodated and worked side by side with seven Saudi Arabian Firefighters through the International Fellowship program for six months.
• Attended Neighborhood Watch meetings to enhance relationships with fire house staff and surrounding neighborhoods.
• Developed “Sunny Swell” campaign, our new beach mascot, and created signage and videos to promote the beach sign location program.
• Team developed educational videos and public service announcements (PSAs) on various safety topics.
• Formed a social media employee work team and process, and hired a summer social media intern.
• Improved interdepartmental and intradepartmental communication and collaboration.
• Implemented employee-managed work groups to address specific needs and topics.
• Worked alongside the Myrtle Beach Police Department on Active Assailant Response planning, safety messages and city organization facility safety practices.
• Hosted first department-wide meeting in 15 years.
• Collaborated with Public Works to execute traffic preemption project.
• Department worked with Grand Strand Medical Center (GSMC) to improve EMS service and advance capabilities.
• Team assisted GSMC staff to develop a Physician Response Unit staffed by third and fourth-year emergency medicine residents.
• Worked with hospital’s cardiac teams to keep emergency contact to balloon time well below the national goal for heart attack patients.
• Department’s medical director partnered with GSMC staff to reduce sepsis mortality by more than 50% with the continued use of the Fire Department’s sepsis protocol plan.
• Team provided opportunities for Emergency Room residents to ride with the city’s medic units, providing an in-depth experience and wealth of information.
• Department helped coordinate and conduct an active assailant response exercise with the Myrtle Beach Police Department and additional agencies at Grand Strand Medical Center.
• Partnered with the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC) through the Community Education by Paramedic Outreach (COPE) Program to participate in training for those who have overdosed.
• Trained several paramedics in the Rapid Sequence Intubation (RSI) skill.
• Personnel attended National All-Hazards Incident Management Conference.

Emergency Management

• Division assumed administrative duties of the Type-Three Regional Incident Management Team.
• The Emergency Management team organized and executed the city’s cohesive response to Hurricane Florence, including the Emergency Operations Center.
• Team was deployed with three fire department employees to Dillon for Hurricane Florence.
• A total of five fire department employees were deployed to Florida for Hurricane Michael.
• Deployed an Advanced Life Support ambulance to serve Panama City, Florida, for Hurricane Michael.
• Received an enclosed trailer from SLED to convert into a mobile command post and workspace.
• Provided one four-person company to cover the City of Conway for three weeks (24 hours a day and seven days a week) due to Hurricane Florence’s subsequent flooding.
• Made significant improvements to the Emergency Operations Center using feedback from Hurricane Florence event.
• Created a Policy Room for Emergency Operations Center personnel.
• Maintained the Emergency Operations Center’s immediate readiness in preparation for any possible emergency needs.
• Numerous team members attended various grant-funded Emergency Management classes throughout the country.
• Increased employee security by instituting an employee badge policy and facility-entry safety measures.
• In 2019, the Emergency Management Division organized and received its first operating budget.
• The team reviewed and updated the city’s Emergency Operations Plan, including several new annexes (flood warning and response, employee classification and severe weather).
• The city’s Community Rating System (CRS) points increased in part due to the development of a comprehensive Flood Warning and Response Plan.

Safety Improvements

• The department made numerous safety improvements for city employees and the greater public.
• Team conducted research on enhancements to turnout gear that lowers fire staff’s exposure to cancer-causing agents, or carcinogens.
• A total of 21 new sets of the turnout gear arrived in June 2019.
• Myrtle Beach Fire Department is the first department in the state to utilize this technology.
• Installation of the exhaust capture systems was completed in five fire stations, actively fighting exhaust, a known carcinogen.
• Began process of implementing traffic signal preemption for major intersections.
• Purchased six mini thermal imaging cameras to assist city firefighters on active fire scenes.
• Completed two-year research process of hoses, nozzles and fire streams to purchase the most effective, efficient fire hose to best meet the city’s needs.
• Completed first full fiscal year as primary ocean rescue response.
• Received certification again by the United States Lifesaving Association (USLA) as an Aquatic Rescue Response Team.
• Selected by the International Association of Fire Chiefs to have documentary made about the department’s ocean rescue program.
• Secured grant funding and trained personnel in swift water rescue at the National Whitewater Center in Charlotte, North Carolina.
• Received generous donations to support Ocean Rescue Program efforts.
• Completed the fourth rescue swimmer training program, bringing the total number of qualified swimmers to 39.
• Various team members certified as boat operators from the United States Coast Guard and State of South Carolina.
Human Resources & Organizational Development Department

The department’s overall objective during Fiscal Year 2018-19 was to better enhance the workplace and overall experience for City of Myrtle Beach employees. The department’s redevelopment initiative consisted of service-minded planning to provide our “First in Service” team with support, educational needs and supplemental opportunities. The process allowed for the department’s new structure to outline the following steps in each employee’s unique professional cycle: Source, Align, Develop and Retain/Reward.

Source Function

- The most significant challenge the department faces is to hire the highest quality team members in a tight labor market, often with more jobs available than job applicants.
  - During the fiscal year, the department received and processed 4,541 applications for employment to fill 136 positions.
  - Incoming applications decreased in December 2018, and continued to decline by nearly 55% by the end of the fiscal year.
  - The significant challenge of recruitment led to the analysis of the department’s structure and how to best evolve with the new challenges.
- Team focused on actively seeking out and sourcing the most elite talent to match with the appropriate team to thrive within the organization.
- New sourcing process aligned with the city organization’s Vision Statement.
- The need to attract local talent, especially those in need of pre-professional opportunities, led to the establishment of a new internship program. It provides interns with work experience, professional training with the city organization and exposure to local government employment.
- The program provides the city organization with a larger, more enhanced pool of candidates for recruitment efforts.
- The new internship program included the following departments:
  - Fire Department
  - Human Resources & Organizational Development Department
  - Neighborhood Services Department
  - Parks, Recreation & Sports Tourism Department (Sports Tourism Division)
  - Planning & Zoning Department
  - Public Works Department

Align Function

- The department overhauled the orientation process to suit the needs of prospective employees.
- The “new hire” experience now better aligns with the organization’s mission and vision.
- The new orientation format places less emphasis on paperwork and more attention on what a career in public service means within the City of Myrtle Beach organization.
• Through education, new hires are presented with tools to thrive within the organization and contribute as an individual leader, regardless of the employee’s individual title.
• New hires are connected with existing employees as a “buddy” during orientation to best provide them with a source for information and guidance to best navigate the transition as a City of Myrtle Beach employee.

Development Function

• Four years ago, the organization introduced the City Leadership Institute (C.L.I.M.B. Program) to provide employees with the necessary opportunity to develop skills, create a succession planning process and collaborate with various other departments to strengthen interdepartmental relationships.
• During Fiscal Year 2018-19, the city organization team recommended further improvements and modifications to the City Leadership Institute process in an effort to continue development without impacting budget needs.
• At the end of the fiscal year, 331 employees have completed the program training.
• Following the success of CityLEARN (enacted during 2017-18), the program expanded on the topic of continuing education for employees, developing an organization-wide workplace culture.
• During the fiscal year, city team members completed 4,114 courses on topics which included:
  ✓ Discrimination Prevention
  ✓ Drug-Free Workplace Policies and Programs
  ✓ Information Security and Technology Safety
  ✓ Sexual Harassment Awareness and Procedures
  ✓ Workplace Violence Prevention

Retain/Reward Function

• The department’s team hosted feedback meetings in December 2018 to better understand what reward and retention strategies were valued most by city team members.
• Through this feedback process, the department has actively collaborated and planned for services to better meet the employee needs.
• The following goals were outlined through the feedback process:
  ✓ Additional Development Opportunities
  ✓ Horizontal Initiative Participation
  ✓ Operation Innovation
  ✓ Position Assessments
CityELEVATE Program

- The Human Resources & Organizational Development Department led this collaborative, multi-year project to expand the current job roles from being task-focused to a competency-based function.
- During the fiscal year, the primary focus was to better source talent and implement consistent practices across all city departments.
- Using competency models, the HR/OD team provided all departments with the needed support for innovative, fair and equitable hiring practices.
- This initiative modernizes the following city processes for employees:
  - Recruitment
  - Alignment
  - Development
  - Measurement
  - Promotion

Hurricane Florence Event

The City of Myrtle Beach organization serves as a united front year-round, but the statement means even more when our community is faced with an emergency. September 2018 brought Hurricane Florence to visit, and the subsequent flooding provided a hurdle for all of Horry County. The Emergency Management Division, housed within the Fire Department, serves as the city’s primary decision-making emergency team and point of contact for our local government partner agencies. Here’s a quick list of the city’s achievements.

City of Myrtle Beach Staff Efforts

- With the impending storm’s possible direct impact, city staff began emergency communication practices and alerting the public on how to prepare, evacuate and re-enter the city.
- Due to the city’s unique industry, an element of hurricane education is intertwined with emergency communication to advise unexperienced residents, business owners and guests regarding what to expect.
- Ahead of the storm, city staff completed projects to minimize flooding throughout the city.
- Work included clearing drains, trimming trees on public property, preparing city facilities and lowering the water level at Grand Park Lake.
- Staff coordinated the funding and supply of sand and sand bags for free at the City Services Building.
- Crews relocated and prepositioned city vehicles to the Myrtle Beach Convention Center in an effort to be fully prepared to serve the city at a moment’s notice.
- Hours before the storm arrived, the city’s Emergency Operations Center (EOC) was fully staffed and engaged, answering questions from the media and public as well as tracking damage reports.
• City staff and Mayor Brenda Bethune answered local, regional and national media requests and conducted interviews regarding the hurricane’s impending arrival.
• The EOC remained open and engaged until the South Carolina Governor’s evacuation orders were lifted.
• During the storm, the Convention Center team warmly welcomed City of Myrtle Beach first responders, with meals served by the convention center and additional food donated by local restaurants.
• Simultaneously, General Robert H. Reed Recreation Center housed Emergency Operations Center staff.
• City staff cleared roads, sidewalks and other public property following Hurricane Florence’s visit.
• Fortunately, the city received only minor damage and was up and open for business shortly after the hurricane’s departure.
• However, the bigger threat for our neighbors in Horry County was the storm’s rain runoff from North Carolina, flowing into the Waccamaw River.
• City staff began advising drivers of possible road issues and commuting concerns, while asking travelers to fly in to the city’s airport as a way of eliminating excess traffic on roadways.

Support for Neighboring Communities

• When the storm passed, the dry sand bags were recollected and redistributed to our Horry County neighbors in preparation for the Waccamaw River flooding to come.
• The Fire Department provided a four-person company to cover the City of Conway for three weeks (24 hours a day and seven days a week) due to Hurricane Florence’s subsequent flooding.
• Free meals were provided for those affected by the flooding at Mt. Olive A.M.E. Church.
• The City of Myrtle Beach loaned the City of Conway bike racks that served as road barriers to block traffic from driving down dangerous roads.
• The displaced Coastal Carolina University football team was warmly welcomed and practiced at the Doug Shaw Stadium due to home field flood damage.
• Post hurricane and flooding, the city helped organize and host a Darius Rucker concert charity event to provide much-needed funding to locals who were adversely affected by Hurricane Florence and river flooding.
Insurance & Risk Services Department

During the recent fiscal year, the Insurance & Risk Services Department protected the city organization and the city’s assets against losses. The department provided support by attaining the following goals in Fiscal Year 2018-19.

Education and Services

- During Fiscal Year 2018-19, a total of 2,555 safety training hours were taught during 28 classes.
- Tracked training hours are now added to the employee’s CityLearn account.
- Department planned and hosted the first Health and Benefits Symposium, with many vendors on hand to discuss benefit coverage and answer employee questions.
- Team streamlined the new employee safety orientation training process to ensure all new hires receive required training.
- The new employee safety orientation process now includes a meeting with a Colonial Life representative within the first 30 days of employment.
- The safety division completed 29 city park inspections and 90 sewer pumping station inspections.
- Department’s safety coordinator completed requirements to become a certified instructor for the Stop the Bleed Program, now available to employees.
- Started a weekly “Did you know?” educational campaign with flyers to provide health insurance and wellness program updates to city staff.
- From January 1 to June 1, 2019, the team’s health specialist completed 39 one-on-one new hire orientations and 22 new hire group orientations.
- Fiscal year worker’s compensation claims totaled 141, while liability claims totaled 64.
- The department continued oversight of Wellness and Occ-Med Clinics.
- Cologuard offered as new benefit and added as part of the wellness program (service is 100% covered by the insurance program).

Initiatives and Programs

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) paperwork submissions were coordinated, completed and submitted for the Hurricane Florence event.
- Implemented a Worker’s Compensation Information Card for Fire and Police Departments to reduce billing errors for injured workers.
- As of January 1, 2019, the department now conducts the random drug testing program.
- Provided free Cyber Protection (IDShield) to all regular and permanent part-time employees, effective April 1, 2019. The IDShield product includes safety privacy, security, and social media monitoring, as well as consultation support for covered emergencies.
• Coordinated with four additional city departments for the first Employee Awareness Event to provide a training class regarding emergency response procedures and preparations.
• The event provided information to attendees about the employee’s responsibilities prior to, during, and after an event.
• Event attendees also received important information about protecting and preparing the employee, their family and home.

**Municipal Court**

During the fiscal year, the Municipal Court adjudicated criminal misdemeanor offenses involving city ordinances and state statutes. In Fiscal Year 2018-19, the following highlights were noted.

**Homeless Court**

• Judge Jennifer Wilson continued the planning process for the Homeless Court.
• Judge Wilson attended a Homeless Court Summit in San Diego, California, along with Attorney George Cauthen and others from South Carolina.
• On March 18, 2019, the first session of the Myrtle Beach Homeless Court was held at the local men’s shelter.
• The event attracted city officials, members of the public and media representatives to the historic event.
• Homeless Court was held again on May 22 and July 17, 2019.
• Judge Wilson co-authored an article with George Cauthen that was published in the South Carolina Bar Journal, a magazine distributed to all lawyers practicing in South Carolina.

**Additional Accomplishments**

• Amy Sutter received the promotion to Clerk of Court in March after serving as a Ministerial Recorder for 17 years.
• Deputy Clerk Deloris Dewitt and Clerk Amy Sutter worked together to best handle the various demands of the Court, including daily bench trials.
• The Municipal Court and Clerk of Court handled 24,468 cases during the fiscal year which ended June 30, 2019.
• Totals are reported for the number of arrests, search warrants, General Sessions and daily bond hearings.
• To best serve during Memorial Day weekend, the court team worked 24-hour days, Friday through Monday, May 24-27.
• The team held bond hearings every six hours during the Memorial Day weekend.
Over the course of Fiscal Year 2018-19, the Myrtle Beach Convention Center team experienced and embraced a great deal of change. The following is a snapshot of the additions, challenges and successes the dynamic group faced and accomplished.

**Facility Enhancements**

- The convention center campus was transformed during the summer months of 2018.
- New shrubs and trees were added to enhance the overall greenspace of the facility.
- Campus driveways were resurfaced and lawns were replaced.
- The iconic Wyland Whale Wall Mural received a fresh coat of paint and sealant to keep it vibrant for another 25 years.
- “Burroughs & Chapin Boulevard,” a new road connecting Oak Street and Grissom Parkway, opened in Fall 2018 to provide a new access point to both the Myrtle Beach Convention Center and Sports Center facilities.
- The new entrance off Burroughs & Chapin Boulevard was named “Sports Center Way” and now provides Sheraton and convention guests a direct route to Grissom Parkway and the Broadway at the Beach entertainment district.
- All improvements led to revised maintenance specifications and requests for proposals from landscape companies.
- In an effort to provide maintenance consistency, the convention center team now cares for areas surrounding the convention center and hotel.
- The operations and engineering team refurbished the exhibit hall doors with new hardware and fresh paint, and various other renewal projects enhanced appearances while saving money and time.
- Fortunately, the convention center facility experienced little to no damage during Hurricane Florence.
- However, the Hurricane Florence event and subsequent flooding provided a financial hurdle, with cancellations and rescheduled events affecting the projected yearly activity.
- The team extended a warm welcome to the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce’s new leadership and provided a behind-the-scenes, in-depth look at the facility.
- The tour was an opportunity to discuss the facility, marketing tactics and the tradeshow industry.
• In Spring 2019, the convention center began the planning process to replace three aged HVAC units that are responsible for heating and cooling the lobbies and concourses.
• An engineering firm familiar with the facility (replaced the other HVAC units in 2014-15) engaged with staff to guide the project.
• Funding for the conversion became available in July 2019, so the process of HVAC replacement is underway.
• In Spring 2019, all exterior areas visible to the public were painted; the loading docks and service portions will be completed in the current fiscal year.
• The parking lots have been, and continue to be, resurfaced and restriped, with an estimated 75 percent completed.

Events

• The convention center hosted an impressive 332 events during Fiscal Year 2018-19.
• Exhibit Hall occupancy for the most recent fiscal year was 64%.
• To compare, the convention center experienced 67% occupancy during Fiscal Year 2017-18.
• A 70% occupancy rate is considered “at capacity” by industry standards.
• The three percent decrease is attributed to event cancellations due to Hurricane Florence and the subsequent flooding event.
• Estimated daily attendance for Fiscal Year 2018-19 was 673,850 visitors.

Neighborhood Services Department

During the most recent fiscal year, the Neighborhood Services Department reinforced the city organization’s commitment to strengthen relationships and enhance services. The following is a brief list of the department’s positive results from Fiscal Year 2018-19.

Events

• Department attended more than 90 Neighborhood Watch meetings.
• Team participated in National Night Out activities.
• Planned and hosted the Second Annual Garden of Hope Christmas Tree Lighting Event, with a choral performance and a special guest (Santa).
• Team coordinated with community for the following MLK Day Celebration efforts:
  ✓ Resource Vendor Tables
  ✓ Ecumenical Service Consultants
  ✓ Unity Fitness Walk
• Neighborhood Services’ staff collaborated with departments to host the third successful session of My Beach 101 Citizens Academy.
- Planned and hosted the annual Black History Celebration held in February and the annual Jazz in the Park celebration in April.
- Decorated the Ted C. Collins Law Enforcement Center’s Council Chamber in recognition of Domestic Violence Awareness and Breast Cancer Awareness Months.
- Co-sponsored annual Booker T. Washington Neighborhood Back to School Block Party and collected school supply donations for distribution.
- Organized a Back to School Prayer Walk for all faiths for the community.
- The team worked to aid in the planning process of the Waves of Praise Gospel Festival, now an annual event.
- Co-coordinated the Carolina Panthers’ “Keep Pounding” Day of Service Project at the Garden of Hope.
- Created and hosted city’s first National Day of Prayer event, with representatives of all faiths in attendance.

**Additional Efforts**

- Assisted seven families through the application process to receive certification for CDBG Housing Rehab Services, with four homes completed (three are mid-process).
- Volunteered in Myrtle Beach Elementary School’s Reading Buddies Program.
- “Work Readiness” Youth Education and Training (YET) held with training sessions at Mary C. Canty Recreation Center and Myrtle Beach High School.
- A total of 10 students completed YET training.
- Of the preliminary participants, two transferred, three withdrew from the program and five gained employment within the city (Pepper Geddings Recreation Center and Myrtle Beach Middle School).
- Department served as a representative of the City of Myrtle Beach as a hostess for the 2018 South Carolina Vocational Rehab (SCVR) and Horry County Schools’ “Disability Day.”
- Partnered with SCVR for 2019’s “Transition Summer Institute and Disability Mentoring Day.”
- Served on panel for Horry County Schools CONNECT 2019 Summer Orientation for students selected as being “at risk” of not graduating from high school.
- Team attended 2019 Education and Business Summit in Greenville, South Carolina.
The re-organization led to the new department’s creation, which now houses parks, recreation services and sports tourism functions (effective July 1, 2019). During Fiscal Year 2018-19, the teams collectively produced the following significant accomplishments.

**Chapin Memorial Library**

- Completed much needed renovation of the library’s roof.
- Partnered with an Eagle Scout to complete “Little Libraries” project, which includes the placement of boxes throughout the city for free book exchanges.
- Staff hosted more than 116,500 annual visitors.
- Team planned and executed a total of 739 programs during the fiscal year:
  ✓ Total Program Participants – 16,853

**Parks**

- Staff provided planning and services for 34 special events (including festivals, parades, running events, etc.) during the fiscal year.
- During these events, staff worked more than 6,600 man-hours.
- The costs of the associated special events totaled more than $326,000 and included:
  ✓ Labor and Overtime Costs
  ✓ Equipment Usage
  ✓ Needed Materials
- Beach crews raked the beach more than 250 days, picking up a total of approximately 500 tons of shells, seaweed, trash and assorted debris.
- During the fiscal year, the team emptied the litter and recycling receptacles on the beach approximately 94,000 times.
- During the fiscal year, the team emptied litter receptacles on the boardwalk approximately 19,000 times.
- Staff completed the small dog section project at Barc Parc South.
- Staff finished the observation pier project at Withers Swash Park.
- The city opened new bathroom facilities at Savannah’s Playground and began work on Phase 2.
- Installed new rubber surfacing at two playgrounds.
- Replaced all Cabana Section Fitness Trail workout equipment along Ocean Boulevard and installed new rubber surfacing.
• Team maintained public rights-of-way:
  ✓ Pruned more than 4,500 trees.
  ✓ Mowed 102 miles a total of twenty times.
  ✓ Landscaped medians located within 49 miles of highway each week, using more than 600 shrubs and flowers and 2,000 cubic yards of mulch.
• Ongoing Highway 501 landscaped median renovations included tree-planting, sod-laying and irrigating system additions.
• Litter crews collected trash and debris from various streets and highways on 330 days in the last fiscal year.

Recreation Services

• Renovated train cars and installed landscaping and a new ramp at the Myrtle Beach Train Depot.
• Installed new picnic shelter at Grand Park.
• Completed much-needed renovations at Mary C. Canty Recreation Center.
• Served more than 119,894 annual visitors at Crabtree Memorial Gymnasium, surpassing the previous year’s record by 14,000.
• Hosted 505 rentals and 61,742 visitors at the Robert H. Reed Recreation Center.
• During the fiscal year, the Adult Sports program had 254 teams participate, with 4,149 individual players (hosted at Grand Park Athletic Complex).
• Completed renovations to youth restrooms, cardio locker rooms and staff kitchen at Pepper Geddings Recreation Center.
• Hosted more than 40,000 swimmers at the city’s two aquatic facilities (Mary C. Canty and Pepper Geddings Recreation Centers).
• The city’s Youth Sports Division was named the Athletic Department of the Year by the South Carolina Parks and Recreation Association for the sixth time in the last 10 years.

Sports Tourism

• Identified and recruited new, diverse events to positively affect the city and community during shoulder seasons.
• New event examples include:
  ✓ Beach United Myrtle Beach Pre-Season Soccer Classic (Grand Park Athletic Complex)
  ✓ Goombay “Kickin’ It at the Beach” Kickball Tournament (Ned Donkle Field Complex)
Beach Town Throw Down (Doug Shaw Memorial Stadium)
Altogether, the three aforementioned examples generated more than $600,000 in estimated direct-spending and around $10,000 in city taxes, fees and license revenue.

- Generated more than 487,000 total website views and more than 101,000 total broadcast views through various sports tourism websites…
  - www.grandparklive.com
  - www.myrtebeachspringtraining.org
  - www.myrtebeachsportsevents.com
- Entered into a marketing-based partnership with The Market Common, which included establishing a monthly workshop to focus on enhancing guest experience and driving increased visitation to the surrounding business community.
- Through extensive efforts, the sports tourism team regained Diamond Sports Group, returning the Diamond Sports All-American Week (late December) back to Myrtle Beach after being hosted in Virginia Beach for one year.
- The event generated more than $1.2 million in direct spending and $20,000 in city taxes, fees and license revenue.
- Created new agreement with Diamond Sports Group to add a second youth football event during the Thanksgiving holiday weekend.
- Revived and rebranded Visit Myrtle Beach Club Challenge Youth & Track Field Meet after a two-year absence.
- In conjunction with the new Myrtle Beach Track & Field Club Board, the sports tourism team assumed ownership and management of the Doug Shaw Memorial Stadium event.
- The Youth & Track Field Meet brought:
  - 700 young athletes to Myrtle Beach for the event.
  - Generated an estimated $200,000 in direct spending and $4,000 in city taxes, fees and license revenue.
- Hired a full-time professional to manage all aspects of Spring Break Meets, a three-meet series of events for high school and collegiate athletes in March and April.
- The Spring Break Meets generate an estimated $1.5 million in direct spending and $30,000 in city taxes, fees and license revenue.
  - Events generated support from 10 community partners and operated “in the black.”
Planning & Zoning Department

The re-organization led to the new department’s creation, which now houses both planning and zoning functions (effective July 1, 2019). During Fiscal Year 2018-19, the teams collectively produced the following significant accomplishments, in addition to providing support to the Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals and Community Appearance Board.

Grants, Funding and In-Kind Aid (Nearly $100,000)

- $1,000 – America Walks (Road to Zero Project)
- $25,000 – America Walkers (Road to Zero Project)
- $8,000 – TD Bank Tree Days (Withers Swash Park Tree Planting Event)
- $20,000 – TD Bank Green Streets (landscape and hardscape Improvements at Myrtle’s Market)
- $30,000 – National Fitness Campaign (Fitness Court)
- $15,000 – SCEMD Grant (Business Disaster Recovery Symposium)

Planning Accomplishments and Statistics

- Planned and hosted a grand opening event for the Jack O. Walker Trailhead on the East Coast Greenway, which was previously funded by a portion of the ABRDA $50,000 Grant.
- Coordinated the Andre Pope Mountain Bike Skills Park event, which was previously funded by a portion of the ABRDA $50,000 Grant.
- Updated Tourism Element of the city’s Comprehensive Plan.
- Worked alongside Horry County and the Governor’s Office to recognize two opportunity zone designations in the City of Myrtle Beach.
- Attended the Governor’s Opportunity Zone Summit in Columbia, South Carolina.
- Supported the Assistant City Manager and Downtown Redevelopment Corporation Executive Director to create an Opportunity Zone Prospectus for the city’s two zones.
- Assisted the Construction Services team for the annual update of the Hazard Mitigation Plan.
- Worked with Recast Cities to develop a small scale manufacturing report for the city.
- Created “History of The Bowery” pedestal sign for The Bowery’s 75th Anniversary Celebration.
- Created sign for the “Carroll Taylor Beach Access.”
- Worked with Grand Strand Area Transportation Authority (GSATS) on 501 Realignment Project, with intersection improvement planning for Ninth Avenue North, Broadway Street and Oak Street; plan also included extension of Fred Nash Boulevard to Harrelson Boulevard, which now will include a bicycle and pedestrian path.
• Collaborated with Benchmark and Downtown Redevelopment Corporation on the Downtown Master Plan, with work beginning with the plan’s inception to the first phase of implementation.
• Reviewed, donated and cleared 23 years’ worth of research and information to prepare for the team’s relocation to the City Services Building.
• Won a national award from the American Planning Association.
• Reviewed 55 applications for the Planning Commission, with the following outcomes:
  ✓ 649 New Single Family Lots
  ✓ Nine New Commercial Lots
  ✓ 1.59 Acres Annexed into the City of Myrtle Beach
  ✓ 35 New Street Names
• The addressing process was improved and streamlined, with the following outcomes:
  ✓ 49 Address Corrections
  ✓ 63 Business License Address Verifications
  ✓ 31 New Commercial Addresses
  ✓ 15 New Residential Subdivision Addresses
• In addition, the team served thousands of citizens, members of the business community and visitors:
  ✓ Performed 127 Plat Reviews
  ✓ Created 68 Mapping Projects
  ✓ Co-Hosted 120 Business Disaster Recovery Symposium Attendees (January 2019)
  ✓ Hosted 60 Municipal, County, State and Non-Profit Representatives at the Regional Bicycle Summit (January 2019)
  ✓ Hosted 150 Opportunity Zone Forum Attendees (April 2019)
  ✓ Distributed 5,000 Bicycle Lights to J1 Students and Community

Zoning Statistics

• Collectively, the department was responsible for 2,371 zoning plan reviews.
• During the year, 533 unlicensed or inoperable cars were tagged, an increase of 175 from the previous fiscal year.
• A record of 30 abandoned signs and awnings were removed, an increase of 13 from 2017-18.
• Zoning team provided 1,531 business license reviews during the fiscal year, an increase of 58.
• Coordinated a total of 10 Board of Zoning Appeals cases, a decrease of 17 from 2017-18.
• Total of 254 fence permits, 281 sign permits and 97 tree permits were issued.
• Team worked to address 544 violations in the downtown district (increase from previous year) and one encroachment violation in the city.
• During the fiscal year, 181 landscaping maintenance compliance issues were resolved.
• Short-term rental violations increased to total 24, with two nuisance violations issued.
• Resolved a total of 110 sight triangle blockages.
Police Department

During Fiscal Year 2018-19, the Myrtle Beach Police Department continued the Council-supported Seven-Year Staffing/Deployment and Police Recruitment/Retention Plans. Among the department’s many accomplishments, here are a few noteworthy statistics and achievements.

2018 Statistics

- Communications Center answered 129,182 police-related calls for service, with 14,703 fire and medical calls for service.
- Detention staff processed more than 10,000 individuals.
- The Investigation Division handled 2,625 cases.
- Coordinated a total of 39 special events (re-occurring events with same name counted as one event).
- Investigated a total of 2,739 motor vehicle collisions and made 430 arrests for impaired driving.
- Collected more than 357 pounds of prescription drugs through ongoing drug drop-off box initiative, which prevents the misuse of drugs in the community.
- Part 1 crime statistics decreased 14 percent during the first six months of 2019.
- The department coordinated 25 Neighborhood Watch groups, with 180 Neighborhood Watch meetings occurring in 2018.
- A grand total of 23,519,648 tags were processed by the Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR), with 77,602 alerts processed.
- The Real Time Crime Unit utilized 815 cameras for proactive response and investigations.
- Department hosted more than 50 Civilian Response to Active Shooter Training Sessions.

Initiatives

- Myrtle Beach Police Department partnered with RING for the Neighbors app, a community watch program where law enforcement and neighbors can share videos, crime prevention warnings and public safety information.
- The RING partnership allowed for law enforcement to distribute 30 free RING video-recording doorbells to residents at community meetings.
- RING users and neighbors can also grant the department permission to access video footage regarding open investigations and suspicious activity.
- The K-9 Unit expanded to add an explosives detection program. The unit adopted Goggles, who is trained to detect explosives, track individuals and conduct article searches.
• The K-9 Unit also adopted Bek, a second full-service K-9 officer trained to track individuals, search for contraband and apprehend uncooperative suspects.
• The second phase of LED lighting increased the visibility throughout the waterfront areas.
• Advanced training now offered in more than 40 different fields, including ALERRT (Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training) training for active shooter response situations.

Public Information Department

The Public Information Department works collectively with all city departments to gather and disseminate information utilizing various tools, including the city website, weekly publications, social media and MBTV. The three-person team wears a variety of hats and works in all media.

Achievements and Publications

• The team launched online streaming function for City Council workshops and meetings at the Ted C. Collins Law Enforcement Center.
• The service can be found on the city’s website and includes an achieve library of recordings
• Posted all agendas, supporting documents, and meeting schedules on a weekly basis to the city’s website, https://www.cityofmyrtlebeach.com.
• Collected information and produced the list of city events, posted weekly on the city’s website at https://www.cityofmyrtlebach.com/events.pdf.
• Recorded weekly 30-minute radio show (52 episodes) to air on Saturday and Sunday mornings on local Cumulus stations.
• Department fielded and responded to 365 requests for access to public documents pursuant to the South Carolina Freedom of Information Act.
• Increased from 17,000 “likes” on the Myrtle Beach City Government Facebook page in July 2018 to 29,000 “likes” in June 2019, an increase of 12,000.
• Posted more than 1,500 items to the Myrtle Beach City Government Facebook page, [https://www.facebook.com/myrtlebeachcitygovernment](https://www.facebook.com/myrtlebeachcitygovernment), during the year.
• Hundreds more posts were distributed on Nextdoor, Twitter and Instagram accounts.
• Produced four quarterly Progress Report newsletters for distribution to 20,000 utility customers.
• Wrote and published 15 informational posts for the Myrtle Beach Point of View blog, [https://myrtlebeachpointofview.wordpress.com](https://myrtlebeachpointofview.wordpress.com).
• Sent 87 media releases, advisories and Friday Faxes to the news media and the public.
• Created and published 52 sets of Photos of the Week and 52 “Did You Know?” items.
• Researched and drafted a formal Crisis Communication Policy and additional communication planning documents which were adopted by City Council.
• Created 41 proclamations.

Events

• The PIO team organized, promoted and hosted annual Military Appreciation Days events in May 2019, a month-long celebration featuring military-themed activities. Various events included:
  ✓ Horry County Junior ROTC Drill Meet in the Myrtle Beach Pelicans’ Stadium
  ✓ Military Family Members Social at the Myrtle Beach Pelicans’ Stadium
  ✓ Military Appreciation Night at the Myrtle Beach Pelicans’ Stadium
  ✓ Vietnam Veterans’ Welcome Home at General Robert H. Reed Recreation Center
  ✓ Myrtle Beach Vet Center Picnic
  ✓ Military Appreciation Days Parade along Farrow Parkway at The Market Common
  ✓ Military Appreciation Days Picnic at Valor Memorial Garden
  ✓ Veterans’ March on Ocean Boulevard
• Organized and hosted the annual Memorial Day and Veterans Day Ceremonies at the Myrtle Beach Convention Center.
Public Works Department

The department consists of a team of professionals that support and enhance the community’s quality of life. This mission guided the following efforts during Fiscal Year 2018-19.

Administrative and Vehicle Maintenance Accomplishments

- Provided Hurricane Education Video to better educate department members regarding FEMA-related documentation and hurricane paperwork logs.
- Managed all FEMA reimbursement submittals for two hurricanes during fiscal year.
- Processed 3,772 fleet work orders.
- Received and processed 4,091 Hansen service requests (1,449 required immediate responses).
- GIS updated Fire Department map system for emergency calls.
- GIS updated important map layers for Police Department for CAD 911.

Engineering Efforts

- Department’s traffic shop completed the final phase of the multi-year effort to upgrade all city-owned traffic signal control cabinets…
  - Total of 26 city-owned signals upgraded
  - SCDOT replaced 46 DOT-owned signals
- PUPs (utility location) request total for Fiscal Year 2018-19 was 13,691.
- Water and sewer applications (includes new construction and renovation) totaled 599…
  - 150 Commercial Applications
  - 449 Residential Applications
- Department reviewed a total of 1,791 commercial and residential plans.
- Sewer mains accepted from private development equaled 20,487 +/- linear feet.
- Water mains accepted from private developers equaled 13,570 +/- linear feet.

Street and Stormwater Efforts

- Responded and resolved 628 service requests, averaging nearly three service requests per day.
- Crew cut 248,794 linear feet of open channels to allow for nearly 50 miles of drainage channels.
• Vactor truck crew cleaned seven miles of stormwater pipe.
• Team responded to seven illicit discharge calls.
• Added two species of fish to city ponds along Farrow Parkway to enhance environment…
  ✓ Grass-Eating Carp
  ✓ Mosquito-Eating Gambusia
• Team worked to develop several water features with new bubbler systems, improving overall pond health.
• Utilized 216 tons of asphalt to patch potholes within the city.
• Successfully managed RIDE III’s $1.9 million dollars for local repaving projects and resurfaced more than 10 miles of roadway inside the city limits. Without the RIDE III contribution, it would take the city five years to accomplish the same resurfacing projects.
• Department repaired a total of 5,566 square feet of city-owned sidewalks.
• Street team swept 21,368 miles of city streets during the fiscal year, removing 9,181.5 cubic yards of waste debris.
• Stormwater team coordinated and supported beach renourishment by extending stormwater pipes along the beach during the project.

Infrastructure Project (Names and Costs)

• Charlie’s Place, Phase I – $279,798
• Crain Woods Fishing Pier at Futrell Park – $33,250
• Fifth Avenue South 16” Force Main Replacement – $598,325
• Flagg Street Compactor Site (Commercial Recycling) – $46,740
• Ocean Creek Pump Station – $492,062
• Ocean Outfall Cleaning Initiative – $1.3 Million
• Savannah’s Playground Expansion Phase 2, including fence – $164,402
• Withers Swash Pier and Gazebo – $109,000

Solid Waste Program

• Procured South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) grants that totaled $39,770.
• The SCDHEC grants allowed the city’s expansion of recycling programs to offer the following…
  ✓ Downtown Commercial Recycling Program
  ✓ Pedestrian Recycling Options
  ✓ Special Event Recycling Options
• The successful expansion of collection routes included new equipment additions…
  ✓ Two Rear-Loading Truck Routes (one for solid waste and one for recycling)
  ✓ Two Knuckle-Boom Truck Routes (one for bulk waste and one for yard waste)

• Prepared a proposal for illegal dumping enforcement and compliance program, with the following outlined duties...
  ✓ Code Enforcement Officers are responsible for responding and investigating cases of non-compliant collections from customers.
  ✓ Code Enforcement Officers are responsible for responding and investigating cases of illegal dumping in rights-of-ways.
  ✓ Senior Equipment Operators are assigned to a Code Enforcement Officer to provide a response time for collection of materials within 48 hours.

• Created and launched a new solid waste service container audit app, which ensures collection crews’ observations on-site match current billing practices.
• The app allows for all properties to be audited to identify gaps in solid waste services, improves collection routes and assesses possible targets for recycling outreach.
• The solid waste team provided Coastal Carolina University with information needed to conduct study that compared costs of direct haul versus continued operation.
• The study’s outcome positively confirmed the efficiencies of the department to maintain both collection and hauling operations.
• The solid waste team supported and monitored crews responding to Hurricane Florence:
  ✓ Collecting storm debris
  ✓ Subcontracting bulk material collection

**Water and Sewer Services**

• Emergency 24-inch force main repair at Fifth Avenue South Pump Station limited environmental impact and interruption.
• Emergency 24-inch force main repair at Pelicans’ Stadium limited environmental impact and interruption.
• Department installed 625 new meters (separate effort from AMI commercial meter project).
• Performed smoke testing on approximately 160,000 feet of gravity sewer lines as part of ongoing infrastructure assessment efforts.
• Efficiently responded to an estimated 3,400 customer calls for water and sewer service issues.
• During Fiscal Year 2018-19, the department maintained 152 pump stations with zero mechanical failures, translating to zero environmental impacts.
• On June 25, 2019, the department worked around-the-clock to repair 14 water leaks that resulted from a pressure increase. The water pressure event costs totaled approximately $21,500.