

COLIN BAENZIGER  ASSOCIATES

EXECUTIVE RECRUITING

Section 8

David S. Johnson

*Belle Isle City Manager
Candidate Report*

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Cover Letter and Resume

Section 8

July 28, 2023

Nicholas Fouraker
Mayor
1600 Nela Ave
Belle Isle, FL 32809

Mr. Fouraker,

I am applying for the City Manager position with the City of Belle Isle. I bring 16 years of results-driven expertise in management, economic development, strategic planning, budgeting, natural disasters, crisis communication, and public affairs. I have a Master of Public Administration from the University of Utah and a B.A. in Communications from Brigham Young University. I am also an ICMA Credentialed Manager Candidate.

I believe that the role of a City Manager is to provide the best professional recommendations to City Officials, even if it goes against popular opinion or personal biases. However, it is also essential to provide timely and transparent information, build public understanding, and foster collaboration. A City Manager and the elected body are a team. If a City Manager focuses on helping the elected officials succeed in their legislative decisions, he or she will be successful in their administrative decisions.

While serving as the City Manager for Blanding, Utah I focused on implementing long-term strategic planning. We prioritized updating various utility and department master plans, including the airport layout plan and the citywide General Plan. The Mayor and I formed a partnership with the Lt. Governor of Utah and Navajo Nation to fund a \$10 million deep-well infrastructure project. Staff and I increased unassigned savings from 15% to the state maximum of 35% and established new policies that ranged from human resources and spending limits to economic development and public utilities.

Prior to Blanding City, I served as the Economic Development & Public Relations Director for a City that was growing by 3,000 residents a year. I created an unorthodox economic development strategic plan that increased annual sales tax by over \$1 million with continued growth. As the City spokesperson, I evacuated 13,000 residents during a 13,000-acre wildfire natural disaster. I was the City's utility player and oversaw several other projects. I partnered with community leaders to rebrand the regional chamber of commerce, secured a \$250K sponsorship to fill a budget gap for a new baseball complex, and managed a committee to update the City's strategic plan.

Previously, I served as the Assistant to the City Manager in Haines City, FL. While there, I was part of the Emergency Operations Center, distributing public information during various hurricanes. I also established an annual Economic Summit and partnered with officials from 20 government entities to create a new regional water cooperative. I worked with a state senator to obtain approvals on environmental permits for local businesses stuck in state bureaucracy. I also rewrote the City's utility billing code to address delinquency, which increased annual revenues by \$250K.

To me, it is essential to use my talents and professional skills to benefit the community. Before city management, I worked in non-profit leadership and public relations and crisis communications, only to realize that I wanted to serve the community in a different way. That is what led me to this profession for the last 10 years. My broad professional background has enabled me to collaborate with elected officials and community groups to form good policy, establish positive public perceptions, and make visions reality. It would be an honor to interview for the City Manager position. Please feel free to contact me by phone at (801) 696-8335 or by email at david.shane.johnson@gmail.com.

Gratefully,



David S. Johnson, ICMA-CMC

David Shane Johnson

david.shane.johnson@gmail.com

P.O. Box 202, Blanding UT 84511

(801) 696-8335

WORK EXPERIENCE:

City Manager, City of Blanding, Blanding, UT

Jan 2021 – July 2023

Management

- Managed a full-service City, with police, fire, municipal airport, and five enterprise utilities.
- Budget Officer for a \$10 million budget.
- Coordinated City elections and official appointments.
- Managed hiring, firing, and human resources.
- Oversaw the bonding process to retrofit the Recreation Center to bring it to state fire and health code.

Strategic Planning

- Implemented the City's first economic development incentive program.
- Conducted process to update the City General Plan, GIS Maps, and Planning and Zoning ordinances.
- Initiated updates to water and sewer master plans and creating the first Natural Gas Master Plan.
- Updated Airport Layout Plan and formed partnership with the airport's Fixed Base Operator.
- Established the City's first Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
- Awarded over \$6 million in multiple grants for planning, recreation, tourism, and infrastructure projects.

Policy & Partnerships

- Partnered with the Lt. Governor, state agencies, non-profits, and Navajo Nation to fund a deep-well.
- Collaborated with the School District to create new policies and fund new school resource officers.
- Created policy to allow City public utilities to sell to other public utilities.
- Established policy to ensure department and administrative spending limits.
- Navigated federal law to update City policies regarding employees who also wish to serve as firefighters.

Economic Development & PR Director, City of Saratoga Springs, Saratoga Springs, UT *June 2017 - Dec 2020*

Management

- Oversaw economic development, public relations, city events, and City Hall Annex facility.
- Managed department budget, daily operations, and staff in the Communications Department.
- Oversaw citywide update to the Parks, Trails, Recreation & Open Space Master Plan.

Public Relations

- Spokesperson and Public Information Officer for all City departments, including Police & Fire.
- Assisted in crisis management and in evacuating 13,000 residents from a 13,000-acre wildfire.
- Secured 10-year Pepsi partnership with a \$250,000 sponsorship for new baseball complex.
- Increased City event sponsors by 300% by implementing a new process and procedure.
- Oversaw all public outreach, media, branding, website, social media, and published City materials.

Economic Development

- Established the City's first incentive program and development agency.
- Created a 5-Year Economic Development Strategic Plan.
- Secured Costco through strong relationships and half the incentives as a competing City.
- Updated and amended City code to streamline economic development opportunities.

Assistant to the City Manager, City of Haines City, Haines City, FL

March 2015 - Feb. 2017

Management

- Prepared City Administration budget oversight monthly coordination for department assistant directors.
- Filled interim roles, such as Senior Planner and Parks & Rec Assistant Director until positions were hired.
- Managed projects in Administration, Utilities, Public Works, Parks & Rec, Finance and HR.
- Interviewed, hired, trained, disciplined, and resolved employee complaints and issues.

Public Relations

- Managed media relations, EOC crisis communication, public affairs and community engagement.
- Created citywide 3-5 year Strategic Communications Plan.
- Coordinated "Taking it to the Streets" initiative, visiting over 600 homes.
- Managed annual Community Survey and significantly increased participation.

WORK EXPERIENCE CONT.:

Economic Development

- Revived long-blighted commercial properties leading into the City's downtown area.
- Worked with Planning Department to update Land Development Regulations.
- Created and organized regional Economic Development Summit.
- Reviewed projects for compliance on the Technical Review Board.
- Collaborated with chamber, business owners, state legislators and agencies.

Policy & Partnerships

- Worked with County and City Managers to form a regional water cooperative and summit.
- Increased annual revenues \$250,000 by personally rewriting the City's entire Utility Billing Code.
- Coordinated citywide RFQ process for continuing service contracts for 14 categories.

City Manager Executive Fellow, Bountiful City, *Bountiful, Utah* Dec. 2013 - Feb. 2015

- Prepared the \$53.6 million FY2015 Operating & Capital Budget document.
- Researched and initiated a new Human Resources policy for staff tuition reimbursement.
- Developed policies and procedures for special events to streamline department communications.
- Created and implemented new processes for community grants and sponsorship requests.
- Researched city museums statewide and nationally to help secure a new downtown museum.
- Coordinated with state officials to create a brochure to educate citizens about invasive deer.

District Executive Director, American Cancer Society, *SLC, Utah* Feb. 2013 - Dec. 2013

- Oversaw an annual \$700,000 fundraising portfolio for half of the State of Utah.
- Interviewed, hired, trained, disciplined, and resolved employee complaints and issues.
- Managed staff and hundreds of volunteers across the state for more than 20 events.
- Developed relationships with key business, civic, political, and professional leaders.
- Secured partnerships with 2 universities as host sites for the National Cancer Prevention Study 3.

Communications Manager, Utah Food Bank, *SLC, Utah* Aug. 2011 - Feb. 2013

- Partnered with the Governor's office, State legislators and local officials on initiatives and events.
- Restructured budget and logistics for annual 5K run to increase *net* revenues from \$20k to \$70k.
- Managed public information, branding, media outreach, marketing, social media, and website.
- Responded to media inquiries, prepared press releases, and maintained media contact lists.

Development Manager, Thanksgiving Point Institute, *Lehi, Utah* Aug. 2010 - July 2011

- Partnered with civic and business leaders to raise \$5.6 million in one year for a children's museum.
- Tracked all donations and revenues, and applied for government, corporate, and foundation grants.
- Managed grant writing and supervised research intern.

Public Relations Account Manager, Wilkinson Ferrari & Co., *SLC, Utah* July 2007 - Dec. 2009

- Created and implemented award-winning strategic Community Relations Plan for an oil refinery.
- Created a strategic plan with multiple municipalities for a 21-mile canal enclosure project.
- Managed a 24-hour community hotline for two oil pipelines and two oil refineries.
- Quadrupled publicity and participation of the annual Utah Lake Festival.
- Managed press releases, media inquiries and public comments for multiple clients.

PROFESSIONAL & EDUCATION CREDENTIALS:

International City/County Managers Association, <i>Member</i>	<i>Current</i>
Credentialed Manger Candidate, International City/County Managers Association	<i>2023</i>
Master of Public Administration, University of Utah, <i>Salt Lake City, Utah</i>	<i>2012</i>
B.A. in Communications, Brigham Young University, <i>Provo, Utah</i>	<i>2007</i>

Candidate Introduction

David Shane Johnson

EDUCATION

Master of Public Administration, University of Utah
Bachelor of Arts, Communications (Public Relations), Brigham Young University

EXPERIENCE

City Manager, Blanding City, UT	Jan 2021 – July 2023
Economic Development & PR Director, Saratoga Springs City, UT	June 2017 – Dec 2020
Assistant to the City Manager, Haines City, FL	Mar 2015 – Feb 2017
City Manager Executive Fellow, Bountiful City, UT	Dec 2013 – Feb 2015
District Executive Director, American Cancer Society, UT	Feb 2013 – Dec. 2013
Communications Manager, Utah Food Bank, UT	Aug 2011 – Feb 2013
Development Manager, Thanksgiving Point Institute, UT	Aug 2010 – July 2011
Public Relations Account Manager, Wilkinson Ferrari & Co., UT	July 2007 – Dec 2009

BACKGROUND

Blanding City is known as the “Basecamp to Adventure” because it is located within one hour of 12 national parks, national monuments, and state parks in the four corners area. Blanding is the primary hub for business, recreation, and social events in San Jaun County, and is located in Southeastern Utah. Approximately 3,500 residents live in Blanding proper year-round, with an additional 1,500 residents living just outside of City limits. This accounts for nearly one third of the total population in Utah’s largest geographical county, which incorporates portions of both the Ute and Navajo Tribal Nations.

The employee base for Blanding City consists of 25 full-time staff members and an additional 60-70 part-time and seasonal staff members throughout the year. Blanding City is a full-service city with community development, public works, economic development, finance, parks and recreation, police, fire, a justice court, and an airport. The City also operates five enterprise utilities in water, sewer, electric, natural gas, and solid waste. As the City Manager, I directly supervise seven department heads that oversee these various departments. The City General Fund for Blanding City is nearly \$3 million, and the total budget is approximately \$10 million.

The three most significant issues facing the City are:

1. Housing. Blanding City is a rural community with a long tradition of residents staying where they grew up. However, the costs to build new homes to allow for local growth is stifled by the dramatic costs in labor, materials, and traveling for major home builders and developers. This has resulted in a nine to 12-month waiting list with local builders, plus an additional nine to 12-month building time. The situation is further complicated by

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the impact of short-terms rentals. When a new home is built, it creates a domino effect of locals selling homes to each other off the market. The last home in this chain reaction is turned into a short-term rental. The impact not only negatively affects local retention, but it also inhibits the ability of major employers, including the City, to hire qualified staff from outside the area.

2. **Capital Facilities and Funding.** Blanding City's facilities, such as City Hall, the Police department, and other buildings are severely outdated and do not provide additional office space to fill staffing needs. Likewise, since the City's elected officials have been averse to impact fees, the City has not been able to build adequate savings for specific needs in utilities, parks, and other capital projects. The result has placed the financial burden on existing taxpayers to fund capital needs, rather than placing it on incoming residents and businesses. Although this is locally viewed as being development friendly, it further stifles the City's ability to address capital needs, attract new development, and diversify revenue sources.
3. **Downtown Revitalization.** Prior to my appointment as the City Manager, Blanding City had an outdated and generic General Plan. It was created in-house by a single long-term staff member and a resident committee. The plan failed to address specific needs, such as basic land use maps, updating ordinances, and revitalizing the downtown area. Blanding City's Main Street is a state highway, which is helpful in covering the cost of maintaining the road, curb, and gutter. Unfortunately, the City's lack of planning and ordinances has failed to incentivize businesses to maintain the same level of service and appearance. Thus, it has created a much bigger hurdle to address revitalizing the downtown area and securing funding to address several dilapidated properties.

GENERAL, MANAGEMENT STYLE AND EXPERIENCE

City management is what I love to do and what I am passionate about. I view Belle Isle as a City where I can offer my background and skillsets to benefit the community. I see the benefits to my career path as equal to the benefits to the City. I believe that the skills and personality of a City Manager should complement the needs and vision of the City.

I often describe my management style like a conductor of an orchestra. As a City Manager, my job is to ensure that all parties play together in a complementary and cohesive manner. Department heads and staff are the resident experts in their respective professions. I cannot conduct the orchestra if I am constantly trying to fill in for the violin, cello, or clarinet. While I may give directions to those who are playing these parts, it is my job to make sure the whole is working together and playing the same song. This allows us to create a symphony that people love to listen to. In short, my philosophy is that a good City Manager gives autonomy and trust to staff members to do their jobs. A City Manager should remain in tune and listen to staff, while providing motivation, mentorship, direction, and correction. A City Manager should also be

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willing and able to jump in if needed.

My staff would say that I focus on the high-level picture and long-term planning. Although, I am not afraid to dive in and work with them side-by-side when it is required. I think that my staff would agree that I stand up for fair wages and benefits. When a full-time staff member was nearly 18 percent below the market minimum, I made it a priority to ensure that she was provided a fair wage. Staff knows that I will not leave them hanging when addressing tough issues. I do not shy away from conflict resolution. When the former police chief illegally connected sewer and water to an unpermitted short-term rental, I supported my staff through the entire process to resolve the issue. When staff struggled to approach an elected official about properly permitting their business remodel, I stepped in as the liaison to work with this elected official, help them understand the need for the permit, and complete their project in a timely manner—just like any other resident or business.

My elected officials would say that I am very thorough and proactive in my approach. They would all agree that I am conscientious of protecting the City from liabilities. They would say that I am by-the-book and that I am not afraid to make professional recommendations, even if it goes against popular opinion or political biases. They would say that I look for ways to diversify City revenues and that I stand up for fair employee wages and benefits. Like staff, they would say that I am not afraid to address conflict resolution.

My strengths are in my ability to communicate. With a background in public relations, I am excellent at speaking, writing, creating transparency, and building relationships. I have the unique ability to remain resolved during conflict resolution and crisis. I am skilled at learning new subject matters quickly, asking pertinent questions to find the root causes of issues, and securing funding for projects. I also pride myself on honesty, integrity, and ethics.

My weaknesses are sometimes in overcommunication and being too trusting of people. I tend to give more background, context, and explanation than people care for. I have learned to create specific talking points to provide succinct and informational explanations. I love to give people autonomy, but a few individuals have taken advantage of that. I have learned that follow-up is essential, as well as maintaining an open door where people feel comfortable enough to speak with me when they need help.

I strongly believe that it is important to have performance-based evaluations with objective scales. The primary measures I use are knowledge and skills; personnel and time management; financial management; planning and organization; leadership and problem solving; customer service; and communication. I strongly believe in setting high, but obtainable goals. I evaluate goals based on the objective measure above. Sometimes goals are not met because of circumstances outside of an employee's control, such as policy changes, shifting priorities, loss of funding, etc. If a staff member fails to reach their goals, due to lack of their own knowledge, skills, or efforts, it will be apparent in the objective measures detailed above.

David Shane Johnson

The biggest achievement in my career was working with the Blanding City Mayor, City Council, Lt. Governor of Utah, and Navajo Nation to create new local policy and secure millions of dollars to provide Blanding City with a new deep-well, while simultaneously creating a path to provide proper infrastructure to a Navajo community without running water. For decades, two things stood in the way of providing running water to this small community across a ravine from the City: 1.) Jurisdictional boundaries; and 2.) Funding. When the Lt. Governor approached me about Blanding City providing water to this small community, I communicated the City's own need for additional water resources for the City. I proposed that if she could secure 100% of the funding for a new deep well that the City needed, and infrastructure to deliver the water across the ravine, that I would work to create policy that allowed our public water utility to sell water to Navajo Nation's utility for this community. It was a huge success! The policy was passed, and we worked collaboratively to secure additional ARPA funds and funding from multiple state and non-profit agencies. The project is currently on track for completion.

I believe that the biggest failure in my career was failing to formally reprimand and potentially fire a key staff member. When I was hired as the City Manager of Blanding City, the Finance Director also interviewed for the job, but did not get the position. Shortly into my role as the new City Manager, I found that the Finance Director was intentionally undermining me to staff, elected officials, and even the public. Rather than giving a formal written reprimand, I tried to give her the benefit of the doubt, put myself in her shoes, and build trust with her. I still tracked her insubordinate behavior in case I decided to formally reprimand her. I had several conversations with her, but I took a soft approach to correct issues when they bubbled up. Eventually, she quit. However, she ended up causing more damage than I saw on the surface. Soon after she left, other departments heads informed me that she made the work environment unbearable. They would avoid the Finance Department for fear of being unwillingly getting caught in a complaint session about me. What I thought was only directed at me, was creating a poor work environment for others behind the scenes. What I learned is that I should have corrected the insubordinate behavior immediately and directly, even if it meant firing her. I should not have continued to take the soft approach. I learned that people who constantly complain and undermine others, especially after several efforts in taking the soft approach with them, eventually need to be corrected with the hard approach.

Prior to this experience, I had to fire a couple of people while working for Haines City, Florida. One of those employees was a dynamic intern who I eventually hired as a full-time staff member. After hiring him full time, I spoke with him to follow up on a specific assignment. I even gave him extra time to complete the assignment, but he failed to update me on his progress. When I followed up again, he told me that it was completed. I asked him to send me an email as part of the project. When I received the email, I immediately noticed that it looked doctored. I followed up with the I.T. Director to verify that it was doctored. I then met with the employee personally to discuss what I found. He admitted that the assignment was not completed and that he had doctored the email. Unfortunately, based on City policy and his actions, I had to fire him. I cared a lot for this employee. While it was not an enjoyable or easy process, we both knew the consequence of his actions. I also had to fire an employee who repeatedly failed to complete

David Shane Johnson

assignments and give notice when running late to work.

I believe that one of the key challenges facing the new City Manager of Belle Isle is that the City is mostly built out. There is not a lot of room for new development opportunities or even City facilities. Looking at the City offices and the police station, both appear to be located in a remodeled homes. Finding a property in Belle Isle is likely going to be difficult, not to mention the current cost impacts of inflation in labor and materials. Determining how to finance a project like this can be equally challenging. Whoever steps into this position will need to look at purchasing existing properties, which will likely require demolition. When a City purchases properties to build new facilities it always brings out resident concerns of, “Not in my backyard,” and concerns about eating up potential real estate for other businesses and community needs.

The first six months of any new City Manager’s job is to learn the budget, staff, priorities of the elected officials, and available resources within the community. My focus will be on evaluating the long-term position of the City, its true financial position, and identifying specific strengths and weaknesses. It is naïve for any new City Manager to come in and think that they can tell you exactly what needs to be done by simply glancing at the situation. Therefore, I believe that it is essential to focus on meetings with staff, elected officials, and key community leaders to ask critical questions and present an evaluation of those findings. Doing so will help me, staff, and the City Council identify low-hanging fruits. From there, strategic planning efforts can be prioritized to address any uncovered issues and leverage the low-hanging fruits that will help move the organization forward in a positive direction.

With an undergraduate degree and a professional career that started in public relations, I consider working with the media as one of my greatest professional skills. I have worked with the media on events, natural disasters, feature stories, educating the public, and even investigations. There is nothing in my career or personal life that could be misconstrued as an embarrassment to the City. I uphold my honesty, integrity, and ethics as uncompromisable.

I primarily use social media as a tool for information, education, and highlighting quality of life. Dialogue is generally most effective and more civil when conducted in person. Examples of how I use social media to communicate with residents includes providing real-time information during natural disasters, links to educational information about new policies, surveys to get public feedback, information about recreation, and highlighting accomplishments of the City, individuals, groups, and businesses in the community. As a public relations professional, I obtained a first-hand understanding that social media is only one tool out of several to effectively communicate and build relationships in the community.

It is highly unlikely that anyone would contact Belle Isle with “dirt.” There are a couple of former disgruntled employees who left for different reasons in Blanding City. They partially blamed me because I worked to professionalize the organization and correct things that did not meet local, state or federal laws. If you speak to most community activists and leaders from the school district, the County, the university extension, the hospital, Navajo Nation, and several

David Shane Johnson

businesses, you will discover a large support of my work to professionalize the City and build collaboration within the community.

My family is the most important part of my life. I spend most of my personal time supporting my wife in her career ambitions and my children in their schooling and extracurricular activities. My wife and I are both avid marathon runners. We coach middle school and high school cross country and track. My family and I are also avid outdoor adventurers. I love to play the guitar and write my own music. Church and community service are also very important aspects of our personal and family life.

SIX ADJECTIVES OR PHRASES I WOULD USE TO DESCRIBE MYSELF

1. Communicative
2. Hard Working
3. Thorough
4. Honest
5. Poised
6. Proactive

REASON FOR DEPARTING CURRENT POSITION

The Blanding City Public Works Director accepted an offer with a 50% salary increase. This snowballed into a City Council member asking for an action item on the agenda to discuss my contract during a public meeting. Even though the Public Works Director made it clear that his departure had nothing to do with me, some City Council members grew concerned about the public perception that I was intentionally forcing staff out, especially after the situation with the Finance Director who quit. Rather than creating an unfair public embarrassment to me or the City, the Mayor and I agreed that it would be best to offer my resignation in exchange for the full severance detailed in my contract. You can see my public resignation online and read about it in the local newspaper. Several people in the community came out to express support for my work as the City Manager—without my request to do so.

CURRENT / MOST RECENT SALARY

My final compensation at Blanding City was approximately \$107,500, in addition to a monthly vehicle allowance, a cell phone allowance, 100% family health benefits, standard employee retirement at 10%, an additional retirement of my choice at 4%, an optional annual bonus at 3%, plus holidays, vacation and sick leave accruals, and standard performance-based raises and COLA.

Section 8

CB&A Background Checks

**Background Check Summary for
DAVID SHANE JOHNSON**

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
County	
San Juan County, UT	No Records Found
Utah County, UT	Results Pending
Polk County, FL	No Records Found
Davis County, UT	No Records Found
Salt Lake County, UT	No Records Found
State	
Utah	Results Pending
Florida	No Records Found

Civil Records Checks:

County	
San Juan County, UT	No Records Found
Utah County, UT	No Records Found
Polk County, FL	No Records Found
Davis County, UT	No Records Found
Salt Lake County, UT	Results Pending
Federal	
Utah	No Records Found
Florida	No Records Found

Motor Vehicle

Utah	No Records Found
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Credit

Excellent

Personal Bankruptcy

No Records Found

Sex Offender Registry

Not Listed

Education

Confirmed

Employment

Confirmed, except for American Cancer Society (02/2013 – 12/2013)

**Background Check Summary for
DAVID SHANE JOHNSON**

Social Media

Nothing of Concern Found

Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, 15 U.S.C. 1681-1681Y, credit and bankruptcy information are very sensitive and should not be used in the consideration of hiring. The information is included for each candidate because we do not want you to be surprised if third parties raise what they consider to be a concern. Also, some states have limited the reporting to seven years, so any records older than that will not be available in those states. In addition, motor vehicle reports are limited to three to seven years, depending on the state.

**Background Check Summary for
DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
Personal Disclosure**

Personal Disclosure Questionnaire

Name of Applicant: David S. Johnson

The following questions are designed so that we will be able to make full disclosure to our client concerning your background. Please answer them honestly. Cutting corners or misrepresenting your past will result in you being eliminated from all further searches conducted by this firm. We understand that frivolous charges are sometimes made and that charges do not mean you were guilty. We also understand that you may have been wronged and needed to seek compensation. The bottom line is that we want to be certain that our client is fully informed. If you have any questions, please contact us for clarification.

Please explain any yes answers on a separate sheet of paper.

1. Have you ever been charged or convicted of a felony?
Yes No
2. Have you ever been accused of or have been involved in a domestic violence or abuse incident?
Yes No
3. Have you ever declared bankruptcy or been an owner in a business that did so?
Yes No
4. Have you ever been the subject of a civil rights violation complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No
5. Have you ever been the subject of a sexual harassment complaint that was investigated or resulted in a lawsuit?
Yes No
6. Have you ever been charged with driving while intoxicated?
Yes No
7. Have you ever sued a current or former employer?
Yes No
8. Please list links to all your social media accounts (Facebook / Instagram / LinkedIn / Twitter, etc.) and your personal web page if you have one.

I listed all below. Several of them are not very active.

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/davidshanejohnson

Professional Facebook: www.facebook.com/davidshanej

Professional Twitter: @davidshanej

Personal Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=1345800936>

Personal Websites:

www.theaveragejoerunner.com, FB, Insta, Twitter, Pinterest: @theavgjoerun

www.outdoorfamfun.com, FB, Insta, Pinterest: @outdoorfamfun, YouTube: @outdoorfamfun7152

www.thisweekinfaith.com, FB, Insta, Twitter, Pinterest: @thisweekinfaith

9. Is there anything else in your background that, if made public, would cause you, our client or our firm embarrassment if it came to light through the press or any other mechanism?
Yes No

**Background Check Summary for
DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
Personal Disclosure**

10. Please provide a list of any lawsuits in which you are or have been a party either as plaintiff or defendant.

N/A

Attested to:



Signature of Applicant

Please email this form via PDF DOCUMENT to Monique@cb-asso.com or via fax to (561) 621-5965 no later than 5:00 PM MST 08/03/2023.

CB&A Reference Notes

Reference Notes
David Shane Johnson

Jim Miller - Mayor, City of Saratoga Springs, UT 801-835-2515

Mr. Miller has known Mr. Johnson since 2017. Mr. Miller was the Mayor of Saratoga Springs during the time Mr. Johnson served as the City's Economic Development and Public Relations Director. During his time in the City, Mr. Johnson also performed several management-level functions.

Mr. Johnson is hard-working, energetic, and enjoyable to work with. His thorough communication is much appreciated. During their time working together, Mr. Johnson kept Mr. Miller informed of his progress on projects and helped prepare him for potentially difficult meetings with dissatisfied residents.

Mr. Johnson excels at innovation. Saratoga Springs is a young city, less than 20 years old during his tenure. As a result, he had the chance to try new methods of fostering economic growth and building trust with the residents. He is skilled at tailoring his efforts to the community's needs. One successful project he worked on was the development of a mixed-use area along the City's waterfront. He gathered input from residents and proposed ideas on how to transform the area into a place that would benefit the community. He united the City Council behind the plan and led the development process. When complete, the new waterfront area attracted residents and businesses to the City. On another occasion, he traveled to Las Vegas to recruit businesses to the City.

Though Mr. Johnson did not have the opportunity to make hiring decisions in Saratoga Springs, he sat on a panel in charge of appointing new members of the City's Planning Commission. During these meetings, he asked insightful questions and gave helpful input. As head of his department, he developed positive relationships with the members of his team, which resulted in a low employee turnover rate.

In Saratoga Springs, Mr. Johnson attended community events, taking pictures and developing positive public relations. He spends a great deal of time in the community. Because of his energy and enthusiasm during these events, his coworkers gave him the nickname of "DJ."

When planning City events, Mr. Johnson is careful to follow the budget. He completes tasks in a timely manner and has good financial skills. He completes and reports on projects within the allotted time. If he cannot meet a deadline, he creates a new schedule and informs his colleagues and the Council. He manages his workload without displaying signs of stress.

Mr. Miller is not aware of Mr. Johnson's involvement in any controversy. Nothing in his background or conduct would concern a citizen or an employer.

Mr. Miller and his colleagues in Saratoga Springs agree that Mr. Johnson was an asset to the City. He will make an excellent manager wherever he goes. He will work hard, form positive relationships, and follow through with his plans.

Reference Notes
David Shane Johnson

Words or phrases used to describe David Johnson:

- Energetic,
- Smart,
- Trustworthy,
- Fun,
- Dependable, and
- Civic minded.

Strengths: Personable, forms relationships with people he works with.

Weaknesses: Sometimes has trouble admitting he does not know something. Needs to slow down and find answers.

Jonathan Evans – City Manager, Riviera Beach, FL 407-818-7012

Mr. Evans has known Mr. Johnson since 2015. Mr. Evans was the City Manager for Haines City when Mr. Johnson accepted the position of Assistant City Manager. They worked together for a year and a half before Mr. Evans left his position.

Mr. Johnson was an outstanding Assistant City Manager. He was a self-motivated employee who produced high-quality work. Mr. Evans especially appreciated his talent for project management.

Mr. Johnson is skilled at personnel management. He takes an active leadership style whenever possible and works alongside his staff in the community. He also makes good hiring decisions. When necessary, he can make difficult decisions to discipline or dismiss employees.

Mr. Johnson is financially savvy. He is intentional and conservative with his use of City resources. He enjoys the budgeting process and takes ownership of it. His sound fiscal management is an asset to the organization.

Mr. Johnson is experienced at interacting with the public. When presenting to an audience, he is confident in his delivery and shows a high level of expertise. During one-on-one meetings, he is empathetic and takes an active role in finding solutions to residents' problems. During his time in Haines City, he served as the spokesman of the department. He also attended and helped run community events. The City's residents held him in high regard.

Mr. Johnson solves problems with a good sense of humor. During tense situations, he maintains a positive attitude. He does not become angry or unpleasant. He helps those around him have a positive attitude as well.

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David Shane Johnson**

Mr. Johnson put his skills into action when Haines City began the process of planning for a new fire station. Residents were anxious about the prospect of increased fees to fund the project. Mr. Johnson communicated with residents about the project's importance and helped fire personnel establish positive public relations. He led teams of internal staff in investigating the new fire assessment fee and its ability to generate the needed funds for the project.

Mr. Johnson has many other fine qualities that help him succeed. He completes tasks in a timely manner. He is creative and innovative. He communicates well with his colleagues and staff and keeps them informed of what is happening in his area of government.

Mr. Evans knows of no controversy resulting from Mr. Johnson's actions. His conduct and background are appropriate for a local government official. Mr. Johnson will make an excellent manager for any organization. He adapts well to a wide variety of circumstances.

Words or phrases used to describe David Johnson:

- Smart,
- Witty,
- Resourceful,
- Ambitious,
- Team-oriented, and
- Great moral character.

Strengths: Good personality, easy to get along with, positive, well-liked.

Weaknesses: Takes on too many responsibilities, needs to delegate more.

Logan Monson - Mayor, City of Blanding, UT 435-678-0733, monson78@gmail.com

Mr. Monson has known Mr. Johnson since 2021. Mr. Monson is the Mayor of the City of Blanding, where Mr. Johnson served as the City Manager. He was a good Manager who works well with others and was motivated to complete tasks.

Mr. Johnson is a hard worker. He strives to finish his work in a timely manner, often completing tasks without being asked. When his workload becomes overwhelming, he responds to the stress by spending extra time working on projects.

During weekly meetings, Mr. Johnson keeps Mr. Monson informed of events and projects. Mr. Johnson is a good communicator. He shares what he is working on and what the Council wants him to accomplish.

Reference Notes
David Shane Johnson

Mr. Johnson is a good leader. He rallies his employees around the organization's vision. He spends much of his time in the office because he feels most productive there; however, he still fosters a team atmosphere. He works together with other departments and offers his assistance when needed. Mr. Johnson also makes good decisions when hiring personnel. The staff he hired in Blanding have done good work for the City.

Mr. Johnson has good financial skills. He creates sound budgets. He is especially skilled at passing financial audits. He works well with a team to solve problems. On one occasion, he led the effort to bring power and water to a small Navajo community near Blanding. He worked with state officials, tribal leaders, city officials, and nonprofit organizations to fund a deep well and bring electricity to the area. His efforts helped improve the standard of living for this Navajo community.

Mr. Johnson embraces change. Because Blanding is a small city, he looked for ways to improve it and encourage growth. On one occasion, he worked to organize a marathon in the City. The planned race would be a Boston Marathon qualifier and attract many visitors. Some of the City's residents initially opposed the idea, but Mr. Johnson took the time to help them understand the importance of trying something new. The event proceeded as planned and was a success.

Mr. Johnson strives to be involved in his community. He attends all City Council meetings and some Planning and Zoning meetings. He is present at community events as well. He also volunteers to coach track at the high school.

Mr. Johnson works hard to establish positive relationships with members of the public. When conversations become tense, he meets confrontation with courage. After discussing the problem, he seeks to find solutions for all involved.

Mr. Johnson resigned as Blanding's Manager in July 2023. He has spent most of his career working in larger cities, and he struggled to understand Blanding's small-town dynamics. The City Council did not share Mr. Johnson's appreciation for innovation. They felt he did not understand the City's vision, and they wanted a manager from their own community. Mr. Monson disagrees with the Council members who pushed Mr. Johnson to resign.

Mr. Monson is not aware of any controversy resulting from Mr. Johnson's actions. Mr. Johnson's conduct and background reflect his high standards.

Mr. Monson appreciates the good work Mr. Johnson did for the City. Mr. Monson recommends Mr. Johnson for the position of city or county manager.

Reference Notes
David Shane Johnson

Words or phrases used to describe David Johnson:

- Task oriented,
- Community driven,
- Financially responsible,
- Good customer service skills,
- Self-driven, and
- Good leader.

Strengths: Works well with others, communicates well, multitasks.

Weaknesses: Wants everything to be perfect and expects perfection from his staff. When they do not meet his expectations, he sometimes assumes their duties.

Ryan Poduska – Council Member, City of Saratoga Springs, UT 385-223-4349

Mr. Poduska has known Mr. Johnson since 2017. Mr. Poduska was a member of the City Council during the time Mr. Johnson was the Economic Development and Public Relations Director for Saratoga Springs. Mr. Poduska admires Mr. Johnson for his optimism, energy, and communication skills.

During his time in Saratoga Springs, Mr. Johnson showed great promise as a leader. Though he did not have many opportunities to manage personnel or make hiring decisions, he assembled and managed teams to organize and run city events. His teams performed very well under his leadership.

Mr. Johnson has excellent interpersonal skills. He spends time in the community, attending meetings and events and building relationships. In Saratoga Springs, his affable personality helped him to unite business owners, city officials, and residents around common goals. He worked with business owners to improve and recruit new businesses to the City. He also involved the City and community in business openings.

Mr. Johnson is a problem solver. During his tenure as Public Relations Director, police departments nationwide were facing public criticism for inappropriate use of force. When the Saratoga Springs police received criticism about their response to a local incident, Mr. Johnson worked to regain the public's trust. He worked with the media and police departments to counter misinformation. He also organized community events to give residents the chance to meet their local police officers.

Mr. Johnson has many other fine qualities that will help him succeed in local government. He responds well to stress and meets challenges with a smile. He looks for innovative ways to bring the latest technologies and procedures to the organization. Mr. Johnson is also a good

**Reference Notes
David Shane Johnson**

communicator. He keeps his colleagues informed of what is happening in his area of government and submits thorough reports in a timely manner.

Mr. Poduska has no knowledge of any controversy involving Mr. Johnson. Nothing in Mr. Johnson's background or conduct would concern a resident or employer.

Mr. Johnson has the talents he needs to succeed in local government. His time as a City Manager in Blanding has helped him develop as a leader, and his skill in mediating disagreements and working with a variety of people across departments will help him adapt to a new organization. He will make a great manager wherever he goes.

Words or phrases used to describe David Johnson:

- Personable,
- Energetic,
- Organized,
- Knowledgeable, and
- Friendly.

Strengths: Personable, leads productive discussions during group meetings.

Weaknesses: At times he does not understand the full scope of the project. He presents work as finished, when the Council wants more done.

David Palmer – Director of Parks & Recreation, Blanding, UT 435-678-9977

Mr. Palmer has known Mr. Johnson since 2021. Mr. Palmer is the Parks and Recreation Director in Blanding, where Mr. Johnson served as City Manager for two years. Mr. Johnson is a great manager. He has great attention to detail, works hard, and drives to improve his abilities. Mr. Palmer respects Mr. Johnson as a great supervisor and boss.

Mr. Johnson is good leader. He gives his staff the freedom to complete their tasks on their own but is willing to assist when needed. He communicates with his staff through weekly group meetings with all the department heads, where he ensures everyone has accurate and current information. He also meets weekly with the department heads individually to discuss concerns and ideas. Mr. Johnson cares about his employees. When Mr. Palmer was diagnosed with cancer, he encouraged him to take time to rest and focus on his recovery. He made sure Mr. Palmer knew that he would still have his job when he returned.

Mr. Johnson also makes good decisions when hiring personnel. During his time in Blanding, he hired a new finance director and an economic development director. He reviewed many

Reference Notes
David Shane Johnson

applicants before making his choice. The employees he hired have been a good fit for the organization.

Mr. Johnson is a good problem solver. On one occasion, he helped the City reorganize its Independence Day celebration. The City had planned to have its traditional fireworks display on July 4th. Unfortunately, their fireworks operator had lost his license and was unable to run the show on that date. Mr. Johnson discovered that the operator would regain his privileges after the holiday, so he proposed holding the City's celebration a week later. The City accepted his proposal and held a successful event the following week.

Innovation is one of Mr. Johnson's strengths. In Blanding, he introduced a youthful and creative way of thinking. He combined this skill with his financial knowledge to create effective budgets. He helped the City do more with their limited resources than they had been able to do previously.

Mr. Johnson tries hard to involve himself in his community. In addition to his work responsibilities, he volunteers with the high school track team, where he shares his knowledge and enthusiasm for running. He also accepts speaking engagements at the school and other organizations.

During his time in Blanding, Mr. Johnson made the best of a difficult situation. When he became Manager, he learned that the City's Finance Director had also applied for the position and resented not receiving it. He approached the situation with tact and professionalism. He always maintained his composure during difficult discussions, even when faced with criticism or opposition. He took care not to criticize others in public and to address conflicts with empathy and patience.

Mr. Johnson resigned from his position under duress. The Finance Director and her supporters convinced the City Council that Mr. Johnson was not the right person for the City Manager position. In addition, many residents disapproved of having a manager who was not native to the area. Mr. Palmer admired the way Mr. Johnson performed his duties with strength and optimism under difficult circumstances.

Mr. Palmer is not aware of any controversy resulting from Mr. Johnson's actions. Mr. Johnson is an honest and straightforward person. Nothing in his background or conduct would concern any reasonable person.

Mr. Palmer recommends Mr. Johnson. He was an asset to the City of Blanding and is ready for a new challenge. He will dedicate his time and energy to his community wherever he goes.

Reference Notes
David Shane Johnson

Words or phrases used to describe David Johnson:

- Driven,
- Wants people to know him,
- Likes receiving praise or acknowledgement,
- Honest,
- Hard-working, and
- Resourceful.

Strengths: Personable, approachable.

Weaknesses: Sometimes makes up his mind before having all the information.

Kd Perkins – Former Council Member, Blanding, UT 435-678-2192

Ms. Perkins has known Mr. Johnson since 2021, when he became the City Manager of Blanding. She served as a member of the City Council until 2022.

Mr. Johnson has many strengths and many weaknesses. He is educated, experienced, and pays attention to detail. He has good interactions with the media, and he takes care to protect the organization from lawsuits. However, the majority of his work experience is in larger cities. He struggled to meet the expectations of the residents in Blanding, a small city of only 3,319 people. He was expected to take on more roles than would normally fall to a City Manager.

Mr. Johnson is innovative. He worked with Blanding's staff to make changes to improve the organization, but he met a great deal of resistance. He was therefore unable to innovate as much as he hoped.

As a supervisor, Mr. Johnson prefers to stay behind the desk and delegate tasks to his staff. He makes good hiring decisions. Though Blanding has only 20 full-time employees, he did have the chance to hire two new staff members during his tenure. He followed proper procedures during the hiring process and did his best to make a fair decision that would benefit the City. He hired great employees.

Mr. Johnson spends time in the community, trying to develop positive relationships with Blanding's residents. However, he had a hard time understanding the mindset of a small town. One of his biggest challenges was when residents would show up unannounced in his office. They expected him to stop what he was doing and help them immediately, which was difficult for him to do. He addressed this problem by scheduling set office hours in which people could meet with him without making an appointment.

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David Shane Johnson

Mr. Johnson keeps his staff and elected officials informed of what is happening in his area of government. He does his best to complete tasks in a timely manner and he does well when he can work on one thing at a time. However, when he has a heavy workload with many projects, he struggles to work as quickly as the Council would like him to. He reacts well to stress. He does not display anger or fatigue and pushes through difficult situations to complete his work.

One difficult situation Mr. Johnson helped resolve concerned the City's wellness and recreation center. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the City became aware that the building did not have proper fire suppression. In addition, its capacity was too small to accommodate the events the City wanted to host. Mr. Johnson helped find funds to retrofit the building and increase its capacity. He also worked with the public health department to arrange for the installation of indoor showers for its pool area. He acquired extensions and waivers which enabled the City to continue using the building during the renovations. The situation became controversial when a community group wanted to hold a banquet in the building. Similar events had been held in the building in the past, but the City now knew that the building could not legally hold that number of people. The event's organizers were angry and pressured the Council to give them permission to hold the event anyway. Mr. Johnson tried hard to protect the City from legal repercussions of going forward with the event. He addressed the organizers and the Council and presented data and reasons to support his position. However, the Council disagreed and allowed the event to proceed as planned.

Though Mr. Johnson dealt with controversial situations in Blanding, none of them resulted from poor decisions or inappropriate behavior on his part. He is an ethical person who will do what he thinks is best for the organization.

Ms. Perkins is not sure why Mr. Johnson resigned as Blanding's City Manager. She has heard that several long-time city employees resigned and claimed it was because of his leadership. Mr. Johnson's resignation could also have resulted from differences in leadership style between him and new council members. Ms. Perkins felt the new council members were aggressive and unprofessional.

Mr. Johnson will do a good job as a city or county manager, provided he has the proper support.

Words or phrases used to describe David Johnson:

- Determined,
- Educated,
- Protects the organization,
- A community player,
- Driven, and
- Careful.

Reference Notes
David Shane Johnson

Strengths: Educated, experienced, good at working with the media, detail oriented.

Weaknesses: Used to working in larger cities. Had trouble meeting the expectations of residents in a small town.

Chris Ewald –Council Member, City of Blanding, UT 970-901-2230

Mr. Ewald has known Mr. Johnson since 2022. Mr. Ewald began his Council term during Mr. Johnson’s tenure as City Manager. Mr. Johnson is an excellent manager.

Mr. Johnson has excellent financial skills. He works closely with the Finance Administrator to create budgets. The budget they submitted this year was fully balanced, which was a big improvement over previous years. He tries hard to complete tasks in a timely manner. Though government work is often slow, he does his best to keep things moving.

Mr. Johnson is a good supervisor. He appreciates the City’s vision and encourages his staff to work toward it. He uses a variety of management skills to lead his team. When an employee does not meet expectations, he works with them to help them improve. Mr. Johnson also makes good decisions when hiring personnel.

Mr. Johnson communicates well with his staff and with elected officials. He makes a special effort to ensure that everyone has current and accurate information. He utilizes text messages, emails, and in person meetings.

Mr. Johnson uses teamwork to solve problems. On one occasion, the City’s airport had a problem with its hangars. He worked with his staff to organize an airport advisory committee. Together, the new committee and Mr. Johnson’s staff created a plan to arrange regular airport maintenance. On another occasion, city officials discovered that the recreation building was not up to code. Mr. Johnson worked with his staff to find sources of funding and plan the project to retrofit the building. Mr. Johnson also had the opportunity to help bring water and electricity to a small community nearby. He worked with a variety of people to obtain funding for the project.

Mr. Johnson spends as much time in the community as possible. He attends community meetings and public events. He interacts with residents whenever he has the opportunity. He is experienced with public relations and has positive interactions during both individual and group settings. He strives to maintain a customer service-oriented approach.

During his time in Blanding, Mr. Johnson endured criticism and attacks on his character because many residents perceived him as an outsider. These encounters left him flustered and hurt, but he handled the situation in a professional manner. He apologized for his shortcomings, and he continually did his best to meet residents’ expectations. Mr. Johnson also struggled to sustain positive relationships with two members of the City Council. He maintained his professionalism

**Reference Notes
David Shane Johnson**

when handling these conflicts. When they asked him to improve in certain areas, he tried hard to satisfy their requests. Mr. Johnson eventually resigned as a result of the persistent conflicts.

Though controversies routinely arise in local government, no controversy has resulted from Mr. Johnson's actions. He looks for solutions to ease controversial situations whenever possible. Nothing in his conduct or background would prevent honorable service in local government.

Mr. Ewald highly recommends Mr. Johnson. He will do an outstanding job for any organization.

Words or phrases used to describe David Johnson:

- Professional,
- Motivated,
- Organized,
- Punctual,
- Reliable, and
- Efficient.

Strengths: Professional, organized, has high standards.

Weaknesses: Had personality conflicts with some of the council members.

Kellen Nielson – City Council Member, Blanding, UT 435-485-0401

Mr. Nielson has known Mr. Johnson since 2021. Mr. Nielson served as a member of the City Council during the time Mr. Johnson was the City Manager. Mr. Johnson's job performance was excellent. Mr. Johnson was organized, on task, and performed his varied responsibilities well. He paid attention to detail and was constantly aware of what needed to be done.

Mr. Johnson is a good boss. He rallies his employees around the organization's vision. He assists his staff in their work when needed, and he defends their rights during council meetings. Mr. Johnson also makes good hiring decisions.

Mr. Johnson is an agent of change. In Blanding, he created and amended city policies and streamlined processes to make them more efficient. On one occasion, the City discovered that its recreation building did not meet state fire and health codes. Mr. Johnson oversaw the process of funding and retrofitting the building to bring it into compliance with the codes.

Mr. Johnson has experience and skill in establishing positive public relations. He regularly attends meetings representing the City, and he spends time in the community outside of work. He takes a customer service-oriented approach to his interactions with residents.

Reference Notes
David Shane Johnson

Mr. Johnson responds well to stress. During tense situations, he maintains a professional manner. He tries to find compromises that will satisfy all parties and help the City accomplish its goals.

Mr. Johnson has many other skills that qualify him for the position. He has good financial skills. He completes tasks in a timely manner. He keeps elected officials informed of what is happening in his area of government.

Mr. Nielson is not aware of any controversy resulting from Mr. Johnson's actions. Nothing in Mr. Johnson's background and conduct would concern a citizen or an employer. Mr. Johnson is a great manager. Mr. Nielson recommends him for the position.

Words or phrases used to describe David Johnson:

- Energetic,
- Intelligent,
- Adaptable,
- Efficient,
- Personable, and
- Reliable.

Strengths: Attention to detail.

Weaknesses: Does not communicate effectively at times, especially with his employees.

Len Gasser – City Council Member, Blanding, UT 435-851-3643

Mr. Gasser has known Mr. Johnson since 2021. Mr. Gasser was a Council Member during Mr. Johnson's time as City Manager in Blanding. They worked together during council meetings twice each month. Mr. Gasser never had any problems with Mr. Johnson. He did great work for the City.

In addition to City Council meetings, Mr. Johnson attends community meetings and events, including sporting events. He strives to be involved in the community and get to know its residents. During these interactions, he learns what is happening among the residents so he can share the information with the City Council.

Mr. Johnson strives to share relevant information with the City Council. He informs them about current events and community needs. However, at times, the information he thought the Council needed to know was different from what they really wanted to know. When the Council made him aware of this problem, he worked toward correcting it.

**Reference Notes
David Shane Johnson**

In his role as a supervisor, Mr. Johnson enjoys observing his staff at work and offering assistance when needed. Unfortunately, his staff in Blanding and the elected officials perceived this trait as micromanagement. As a result, he spent more time behind the desk than he would have preferred. Mr. Johnson makes great hiring decisions. The people he hired have been an asset to the City.

Mr. Johnson is innovative. Upon accepting the position in Blanding, he introduced changes to help the City meet today's standards. Unfortunately, some of the other city leaders resisted change and resented Mr. Johnson for his proposals.

Mr. Johnson has a well-rounded understanding of finance. He used different techniques to improve Blanding's financial standing. He helped identify the best ways to spend money and where not to spend it. He also increased city employee's wages to increase retention.

Mr. Johnson tried hard to complete tasks in a timely manner. Some members of the City Council were dissatisfied with his efforts. However, Mr. Gasser believes their expectations were unrealistic. Mr. Johnson worked as fast as he was able and did not neglect anything. He responds well to stress. During tense situations, he is careful not to say anything inappropriate.

Mr. Gasser does not know why Mr. Johnson resigned. He observed minor tension in the Council before he left on vacation. When he returned, Mr. Johnson had resigned. He suspects that it may have had something to do with two key employees who recently left the organization seeking more money and career advancement. Some of the council members thought Mr. Johnson had not done enough to encourage them to stay.

Mr. Gasser is not aware of anything controversial involving Mr. Johnson. His background and behavior are appropriate for honorable service in local government.

Mr. Johnson did a wonderful job in Blanding. Mr. Gasser recommends him for the position.

Words or phrases used to describe David Johnson:

- Active,
- Tries hard,
- Organized,
- Knowledgeable, and
- Hard working.

Strengths: Very organized, prepared to share information when asked, works hard.

Weaknesses: Tries too hard at times, wants to be involved in everyone else's jobs.

Prepared by: Claire Argyle
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CB&A Internet Research

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

San Juan Record (UT)
August 1, 2023

Blanding City Manager and city engineer resign, council approves payment for dispatch
Author: David Boyle

Members of the Blanding City Council received the resignation of the city manager, approved payment for dispatch services, and discussed Independence Day celebrations at their latest meeting. City Manager **Dave Johnson** tenured his resignation at the July 25 meeting of the Blanding City Council. In his resignation statement, **Johnson** thanked those in the community who had welcomed his family after he took the role starting in December 2020. “It’s not easy to come in as a new city manager. Within my first 18 months, four of the five city council members and the mayor turned over. Also, eight long-term staff members were within a few years of retirement or may look to make career changes for retirement purposes. “I am unsure of what the future held, however we were able to work together as staff, city council, and mayor to move the city forward in a positive direction. “When changes occurred we hired new and equally capable staff and recently established a five-year staffing plan to ensure the continued success of Blanding City.”

Johnson also thanked Mayor Logan Monson and former Mayor Joe B Lyman for their support, mentorship and commitment to **Johnson** and the city. **Johnson** highlighted projects during his tenure, including grants received to build pickleball courts, recreation shade structures, updating the general plan and other projects in the city. “Together we were able to secure more than \$1 million in under three years in county, state and federal grants for planning, recreation, tourism, infrastructure, design work and an additional \$5 million for the Blanding City portion of the deep well project.” **Johnson** added that he had hoped to be a part of Blanding’s future but said he understood that priorities change. “I’m willing to support and assist in the transition if desired and I’m even willing to return if desired. But I understand that there’s a different direction that the city would like to go and I respect that and I respect each of you for your efforts and I want that to be clear publicly.”

Several citizens voiced support of **Johnson** during public comment, with **Johnson** adding clarification that he had not asked people to come speak in support of him but if they did to keep comments positive. Joe B. Lyman was the Mayor of Blanding when **Johnson** was hired. Lyman offered written comments. “It is better to talk with people than about people, it is better to work with people, than against people. “I’ve had a few conversations with **David Johnson** over the past months, he hasn’t said much about what has been going on. He has expressed some frustration but has always been respectful and professional. He has never said a derogatory thing about the Mayor, any member of city council, city staff, or the citizens of Blanding. It saddens me to say that from my observation his behavior has largely not been reciprocated.” Five other Blanding residents offered support or thanks to **Johnson** for his work as the city manager.

At the meeting, the council also received word that City Engineer and Public Works Director Terry Ekker would leave the city. Ekker shared his thanks to the Mayor, council and the

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community for the opportunity to serve as city engineer for the last 20 years. “We’ve had an opportunity present itself that’s going to be awesome for our family. I’ll be moving on and we’ll miss Blanding a lot. We hope to be back here in 10 or 12 years to retire.” Speaking in public comment, Scoot Flannery of Jones and DeMille Engineering offered his thanks to Ekker. “It’s good to work with people that genuinely care about the community. I’ve seen that in Terry. I’m sad he’s leaving. I’m happy to take over his hunting spots.” Flannery also shared his thanks to **Johnson** for his work, and noted that Blanding City staff has been excellent to work with on projects.

At the meeting, members of the Blanding City Council also agreed to pay for 9-1-1 dispatch services now out of Price, UT. Last year, San Juan County moved dispatch services to a center in Price. When San Juan County ran its own dispatch center, the Blanding City costs were absorbed into the county. With the move to Price, the city is now required to pay a proportionate share for the services. While the cost Blanding incurs will be based on volume, with the city in its first year of payment an estimate of \$32,000 was incorporated in the recently passed fiscal year budget. Since that time, the city received an updated estimate of \$39,000 annually but an agreement was reached that the city will not pay more than \$32,000 in this first year as the costs are figured out. Speaking at the city council meeting, Blanding City Chief JJ Bradford offered his support of the outsourcing of the dispatch center to Price. Bradford noted the previous San Juan County dispatch was located in the county safety building where dispatch would also watch inmates and take care of work in the jail. Bradford says the Price center is solely dedicated to dispatch. “They’re there to answer the phone to take calls and send out people for help. I’ve been called out twice in the last couple weeks, at 5:30 in the morning for domestic violence related issues and dispatch is still on the line with the victim when I get there, which is pretty impressive.”

Bradford reports the Price dispatch has been professional and proactive about receiving feedback and addressing local law enforcement questions and concerns. When asked by council if the dispatch has been able to provide directions without being familiar with Blanding, Bradford reported that wasn’t a problem. “If they don’t have an exact address, they can give us a coordinate so we can punch it in and be right there.” Bradford recalled that recently law enforcement responded to a woman who was camping and had become stuck on a washed out road. Law enforcement was able to find the woman using coordinates provided by dispatch.

Council approved the agreement to pay for dispatch services received from the Price dispatch center, with the center agreeing to honor the budgeted \$32,000 for the first year. At the meeting, Chief Bradford also reported that the police department has received seven applicants for the new city position, partially funded by Blanding schools, to bring a resource officer into the schools. Bradford reported Officer Palmer will serve as the school resource officer at the start of the school year as the city goes through the hiring process. At their latest meeting, members of the city council also approved a new firefighter personnel policy. The updated policy follows previous conversations to move the department from volunteer to an hourly rate. City staff hopes that the policy change will incentivize more committed firefighters. At the meeting, members of the council also heard from Blanding resident Kendall Laws regarding the draft resource

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management plan for the Bears Ears National Monument. Cooperating agencies, including the City of Blanding, have received the 700 page administrative first draft document. Cooperating agencies are given an advance issue of the draft to provide private feedback on proposals for the management of the monument. At a later date, the draft will be made open and will provide opportunities for the public to comment on the draft management plan. Laws works for the Utah Public Lands Policy Coordinating Office, which is also a cooperating agency in the monument process and thus has access to the draft. Laws offered to speak with city council or staff in the context of his job regarding the plan. “There’s some stuff in there that the city should be really concerned about with regards to their infrastructure, their watershed, some things like that. It’s pretty serious, and now is the time for the city to either get involved and make themselves heard more than they ever had as a government entity or get steamrolled.” Other cooperating agencies include San Juan County, Monticello, Bluff, Grand County, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Department of Energy, National Park Service, 32 Tribal Nations, including the Navajo Nation and Ute Mountain Ute Tribe, and others. The first public draft is anticipated to be available in November

At the meeting, members of the Blanding City Council also received a report on the Independence Day Celebrations. Economic Development Director Ben Muhlestein shared thanks to all the volunteers that helped make the events possible. Muhlestein also shared that Bears Ears Farm reported more than 4,000 attendees at their event, and the new Grayson Music Festival met goals with great turnout and provided more days for vendors in the park. Muhlestein also noted improvements that would be discussed at a July 27 meeting. Council member Erik Grover shared concern about safety with kids coming far out into the road to grab candy during the parade.

Mayor Logan Monson shared the sentiment, saying that while it’s been an issue in previous years, he shared this past year may have been the worst they’ve seen. **Johnson** shared that concern and other public safety concerns will be addressed.

Members of the council also approved a resolution to act as a pass through for a Utah Division of Wildlife Resource project at Recapture Lake. The agreement will allow the city to provide an assignment through Jones and DeMille on behalf of the DWR, who will fund the project. The funded project will be to create design for recreation improvements at Recapture Reservoir, including design work for better boat access, parking, restroom facilities and possibly other facilities. The layout work would proceed, with eventual construction of improved facilities at recapture funded by the DWR. At the meeting, Mayor Monson also recognized Andrea Jeppson as the Outstanding Citizen of the year, as well as the royalty selected from the first annual Little Miss Blanding pageant. Royalty includes Kennedy Bingham as the Inaugural Little Miss Blanding with Chezney Ivins 1st attendant, Emri Black 2nd attendant, and Navy Nieves 3rd attendant.

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(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

San Juan Record (UT)
June 20, 2023

Blanding City Council approves budget for upcoming fiscal year

Author: David Boyle

Members of the Blanding city council approved their annual budget at their June 6 meeting. The approval comes as the city prepares for the start of the new Fiscal Year on July 1. The approved \$17.2 million budget is an increase of about \$2.3 million over the \$14.9 million budget in 2022.

Blanding City Manager **David Johnson** outlined reasons for the increase, including the city drilling a deepwater well, with millions in grants from the state aiding the project as part of the state commitment to bring running water to the Westwater community. **Johnson** noted other reasons for the increased budget include rising costs of living as well as increases to costs for supplies and maintenance.

The city is also reporting an excess in general funds as they come to the end of the current fiscal year. While the city is budgeted to transfer \$280,000 into capital project funds, staff is projecting around \$350,000 into capital funds at the end of the fiscal year. Among the capital projects for the upcoming fiscal year are the deep well project, the Wellness Center showers and fire suppression system, the updated general plan, remodel of Centennial Park bathrooms, Recapture boat ramp and parking, police vehicles, a UTV for snow plowing sidewalks, and other purchases.

City staff also reports that all the city enterprise funds are operating in the black. The city is budgeting in 2024 to hire two additional employees. The approved budget includes funds for an additional city police officer using general funds and an engineering tech using city enterprise funds. The standard Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) released by the US Social Security Administration was 8.7 percent. While the city did not match the full adjustment, city payroll did award a four percent COLA with performance-based merit raises for an average staff salary increase of 5.7 percent.

City Council member Cheryl Bowers added her support to the work of city staff. “In years past, we’ve been very frugal with increases, that staff got the minimum they could get. I think we have amazing employees, I think we’ve been very fiscally conservative in the past on salaries and this is a year where we have funds to do it.” Following reviews and a closed session to discuss city personnel, members of the council unanimously approved the budget. No comments were given by members of the public as part of the June 6 public hearing.

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San Juan Record (UT)
April 4, 2023

Blanding City Council talks raw water sales, firefighter policies

Author: David Boyle

Members of the Blanding City Council talked firefighter policy, raw water sales and approved a water budget adjustment for a deep well repair at their latest meeting

At their March 28 meeting, members of the council received a proposal to address firefighter policy options for the city. In 2022, city staff reported that a financial audit made them aware that they could no longer have volunteer firefighters considered as 1099 contractors and instead must be classified as W-2 employees.

The accepted policy change by the city came with a city staff determination that current city employees could not serve as volunteer firefighters. However, policy proposals at the March 28 meeting included options to bring city staff back into the fire department.

Three policy options were presented at the meeting with option one of the current volunteer firefighter program run at an estimated cost of \$39,000 annually, with volunteers paid a nominal fee regardless if they were at a scene for two hours or eight hours, and without the option of city employees working for the department. Option two would be a part-time paid department with volunteers on call. The policy would pay firefighters an hourly rate for both training and responses to incidents at an estimated annual cost of \$43,000 with fluctuation possible depending on the number of incidents in a year. The third option would be a part-time paid on-call department. This policy would require five firefighters on call at all times and would cost the city an estimated \$91,000 annually.

Options two and three would allow city employees to work as firefighters. City Manager **David Johnson** highlighted that dual-employees would receive a blended rate of pay based on job duties and rank as a firefighter, and that those employees may accrue overtime hours at time-and-a-half pay. Additional restrictions and requirements were lined out in the staff report.

City staff offered support of policy option two. Fire chief Cory Spillman noted that the hourly rate of pay may help with incentivizing firefighters to be more responsive to the department's needs. While no official action was taken at the meeting, the council made directions to city staff to create the policy with plans to approve it effective July 1 at the start of the city's fiscal year. At the meeting, Chief Spillman also gave a brief report on the March 24 house fire in Blanding. Spillman reported that the department had nine volunteers respond to the fire caused by an electrical issue. Spillman offered thanks to the multiple law enforcement agencies that assisted, including Blanding police who blocked roads and assisted in handing out water. **Johnson** offered his praise of the coordination between responding agencies. "Even though the outcome wasn't the outcome that we would want everybody was safe and that's the most important thing."

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At the meeting, members of the council approved a \$100,000 amendment to the water budget. Needed repairs on city Well A were discovered in July of 2022. In September, the city diagnosed the repair would need a new conductor and pump. The emergency repairs have since been made following approval from the council with the repair costs coming in at \$102,868, including costs for contractors, materials, equipment and supplies.

At their latest meeting members of the council held a public hearing and then approved an amendment to the budget with the funds to cover the repairs coming out of the Water Fund reserves. Members of the council once again discussed a policy for raw water sales by the city. The City of Blanding sells raw water to the Energy Fuels White Mesa Mill from Recapture Reservoir. The mill is the only entity to purchase raw water from the city direct from the reservoir and maintain its own pipeline from the reservoir to the mill.

The mill currently can purchase up to 150-acre feet from the mill at a cost of \$75 per acre-foot when water is available for the city to sell. That rate is considerably lower than the 75 percent of culinary rate that other raw water users pay for raw water out of the upper reservoirs. A staff proposed policy would move the sale of raw water from Recapture to 15 percent of the culinary rate in city limits and 20 percent outside of city limits, with a year-to-year agreement based on water availability. That change would more than double the rate the White Mesa Mill pays to \$168 per-acre foot, for an estimated \$630,000 over 25 years

At the meeting, members of the council reviewed a proposed contract from the White Mesa Mill. The Mill proposed a 10-year contract with five-year renewals. The proposed contract would raise the raw water rate to \$120 per acre foot for the next five years, \$130 for the following five years and a \$5 increase every five years for a total of \$502,500 over 25 years. The mill proposal would also include a minimum spend of \$5,000 each year. Members of the council and staff weighted the benefits with the need of a universal policy, as well as if a tiered system could fit the sale of raw water out of Recapture. City staff made plans to make tweaks to the agreement and bring it forth for discussion again.

At the meeting, Recreation Director David Palmer also highlighted that the city had received a grant for safety shade structures for the ball fields at Centennial Park. Palmer shared that while the city still needs to complete some more tasks for the Community Development Block Grant, the eight permanent shade structures at the park will act both as a safety mechanism for foul balls, as well as provide needed shade at the city park.

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<https://kjzz.com/news/local/westwater-utah-san-juan-county-blanding-running-water-power-electricity-project-lt-gov-henderson-president-nez-navajo-nation>
September 2, 2022

Running water next up for Westwater residents, but timeline unclear

Author: Daniel Woodruff

Now that lights are finally on in a small southeastern Utah community, attention turns to the next phase of the project – running water. Westwater, located outside Blanding in San Juan County, is set to get running culinary water sometime next year, according to Blanding city manager **David Johnson**. “We’re just kind of in that phase of engineering and design,” Johnson told KUTV 2News Friday, “and then based on when that’s completed, we’ll move into that construction phase.”

Currently, Native Americans living in Westwater have to haul water to their homes. Westwater is located on land owned by the Navajo Nation, but it’s not part of the reservation. On Thursday, a long-awaited project to bring the community electricity was finally completed. Homes in Westwater now have power thanks to a plan that uses Blanding’s infrastructure as a “pass-through” for electricity to go there.

Johnson called that a “monumental achievement” made possible through coordination by many groups including the state of Utah, the Navajo Nation, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

State leaders similarly praised the project. “Commonplace in Blanding, the sight of power lines swooping from house to house in Westwater marks the fulfillment of a long-overdue promise to the Diné just outside Blanding,” Utah Lt. Gov. Deidre Henderson said in a statement. “I won’t understate the difficulty of this project, but I can’t overstate the level of collaboration and generosity that got us here.”

“This is life-changing for these families who have lived without electricity in their homes for so many years, some who have never lived with electricity at all,” added Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez in a statement. “Electricity not only provides lighting, heating, and other basic amenities, but it also opens doors to more opportunities.” Nez concluded, “The work doesn’t end here – the next step is to deliver running water to these homes.”

For the water portion of the project, \$3.5 million in federal funding provided by the state of Utah will help pay for a new deep-water well in Blanding, according to a news release from the lieutenant governor’s office, while the Navajo Nation will pay \$5.5 million to build infrastructure to get water to Westwater. The city of Blanding and San Juan County received funding for the research and design process, the news release said. When will water be turned on in Westwater? That’s unclear, according to Johnson. While pointing to next year as the overall goal, he acknowledged there is no definite timeline yet on when construction will begin.

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San Juan Record (UT)
May 18, 2022

Blanding City Council agrees on trees

Author: David Boyle

Members of the Blanding City Council approved a tree trimming policy, approved their contract to repair hail damage and received the Healthy Utah Award at their latest meeting. At their May 10 meeting, Blanding City Council unanimously approved a formal policy regarding tree trimming near city power lines. The policy lays out responsibilities of customers. Including that residents not plant large or fast-growing trees under or near existing power lines and that customers call Blanding City if they notice any tree within 10 feet of an electric line.

The policy also clarifies that customers should not attempt to trim any tree near a powerline. Blanding Electric will trim trees free of charge if work is deemed necessary, residents can also hire professional service companies to trim their trees for them. At the meeting the council also approved a contract with Tri-Hurst to repair damages on city property sustained by a hail storm. Tri-Hurst's bid for the project was \$13,000 over the amount covered by liability insurance. City staff and the construction company worked through line items on the bid to remove duplicates and brought the price down by \$8,400; the remaining \$4,800 of work not covered by insurance will be paid out of city savings.

Council approved the contract with a stipulation that they'd like to see a timeline for the work from Tri-Hurst. Informal estimates at the meeting mentioned six months for the work. Blanding City also released a performance bond held by Tri-Hurst. The nearly \$100,000 bond was held by the city as the company created infrastructure improvements, including sidewalks, at the Meadowlark Subdivision.

With city staff signing-off on the work, the bond was released back to the company. City Manager **David Johnson** also reported on projects at the city. Including the award of a large grant for an update to the city general plan. The \$70,000 grant from UDOT was awarded based on a \$10,000 match.

A city's general plan acts as a guiding document to inform policies and ideals for cities to uphold. **Johnson** reports the request for proposal will go out in July with public input to follow. "They'll work with the public to get probable surveys, public open houses to get opinions on things such as nightly rentals and addressing maybe gaps in our zoning."

The discussion about nightly rentals, such as AirBnb and VRBO, was brought to the council via public comment from resident Shadd Christensen. Christensen has worked the past seven years in Page, Arizona where he's seen the effects of too many nightly rentals and not enough housing for workers. "There are other city residents that are frustrated. If we don't get something in place we will be a Moab and we will be a Page. The problem with those two locations is the locals are suffering and they get basically ran out of town."

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Christensen also spoke about concerns with noise, trash, and traffic. **Johnson** said discussions about nightly rentals are an example of something that could be discussed as part of an update to the general plan. “One idea to address what Mr. Christensen talked about, is you could grandfather existing nightly rentals and then select a zone they are allowed in.”

Johnson did add that recently passed state legislation has tied the hands of how cities can restrict nightly rentals and may be a battle between the league of cities and towns and the legislature to come. **Johnson** emphasized that the city has not made any moves or decisions on the issue of nightly rentals and that the city ought to seek public feedback regarding the issue moving forward.

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San Juan Record (UT)
May 4, 2022

Questions about water and airport dominate Blanding City Council meeting

Author: David Boyle

Blanding City Council discussed airport policy, a sale of water, and approved a bid to repair hail damage at their latest meeting. At their April 26 meeting members of the Blanding City Council heard from six community members regarding a draft policy for the city airport. Discussions regarding the creation of a policy for use at the airport including rates and lease agreements have been ongoing for weeks. While the community that utilizes the Blanding Airport has generally been amenable to implementing policies, there has been push-back regarding increasing rates at the airport.

At the latest meeting city council directed staff to form an airport advisory committee to assist in the creation of policies and rates for the airport. Members of a committee would include a member of the city council as well as representation from pilots and businesses who operate out of the airport. Among those businesses is Guardian Flight. Regional manager Chris Ewald shared his approval of creating an advisory committee. Ewald pointed to a state-commissioned study that reported the airport generates \$11.1 million in annual economic activity. “I think our airport is big enough and has a big enough economic impact that we need to organize an advisory board.” Ewald was not opposed to a small increase in hangar rates, but thought too many other fees could make the airport unattractive to pilots. Ewald recommended the city increase revenue through the airport by aggressively pursuing grants. Hangar fees are currently \$100 a month at the airport.

After 30-40 hours of conversations with airport managers and comparing rates to 17 other airports City Manager **David Johnson** had proposed an increase over several years to somewhere between \$200 to \$300 a month. Other possible revenue sources included introducing tie-down, parking fees, and fines for planes illegally parked. The City Fixed Base Operator, Freedom Fuels, recommended parking violation fines to the city, with an option to waive certain fees if pilots purchased fuel. Freedom Fuels also expressed its desire to keep hangar fees as low as justified.

Johnson echoed a statement made in public comment saying that pilots are looking for the nicest and cheapest places to land. “Well I can say we’re the cheapest, and as many other comments made we’re definitely not the nicest. The maintenance issues have been because of a lack of funds.” **Johnson** noted that the roughly \$42,000 a year generated for the city at the airport did not cover the hours of payroll for Airport Manager Bret Hosler who also wears the Community Development hat. **Johnson** also noted the city street department fills potholes at the airport. “We’re taking money from other general funds to help supplement needs.”

The money generated by the airport currently goes into the general fund which maintenance is paid out of, city staff said they would look into setting up an airport revenue account. Regardless,

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increasing airport rates will wait as the city explores how to establish an airport advisory committee to aid in policy and fee discussions. Blanding City Council also received a report and held a discussion regarding the city's recent sale of raw water to the San Juan Water Conservancy District. At the meeting, four community members questioned decisions made by city staff to approve a sale of 10 acre-feet or 3.258 million gallons of water at \$75 per acre-foot to the San Juan Water Conservancy District. Kelly Laws contended the city should not be selling raw water. "You cannot make enough money off of selling that raw water to compensate for what the citizens of Blanding have paid you in culinary rates. That was a total misappropriation of water and somebody ought to be held accountable for it, it's a disgrace."

Johnson offered answers to two questions: why is water allowed to be sold without city council approval, and what is the reasoning of this sale. Historical precedence of allowing city staff to sign-off on water sales and purchases was given as the reason as to why the sale was allowed to happen. In an email report City Engineer Terry Ekker shared that in good water years the city has historically leased irrigation shares for agricultural use if the city didn't need the water that year and had no excess storage to keep it.

Another historical example is the city's agreement with Energy Fuel's White Mesa Mill. In September 2021 the council approved an annual agreement to sell 150 acre-feet or 49 million gallons of raw water to Energy Fuel's White Mesa Mill at a cost of \$75 an acre foot or \$11,250 annually. This was the first time the agreement had been approved by the council as it historically had been signed off between city staff and the mill.

Johnson explained while the city has a tiered system for culinary water based on use and supply, the city does not have a policy on water sales outside of city limits. "Because we don't have a policy in place and we have a precedence of not going before the council to approve that we didn't really have grounds to say no if we have some capacity."

Plans to draft a policy for rates and approval of raw water sales have been in the works since September. Discussions about the policy included establishing a consistent price for anyone interested in purchasing raw water and also likely introducing a tiered structure of rates based on drought conditions. The question as to why city staff approved the sale of raw water during a dry year to the conservancy district was also discussed at the meeting. Members of the public asked why the city had turned down an opportunity to purchase water from Blanding Irrigation company while also approving the sale of water to the Conservation District in a year when residents are being charged an Orange rate three out of four tiers.

A proposed sale of water at \$300 an acre-feet from the Blanding Irrigation Company was turned down by city staff with **Johnson** reporting that if the company were to bring the level down to the cost for the city to pump their water (an estimated \$50-\$55 per acre foot) the city would consider purchasing some of the water.

Citizens in attendance estimated there were about 50 acre-feet of water for purchase. Ekker explained his reasoning for signing off on the sale of water to the conservancy district. After

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being approached by the Conservancy District in April, city staff evaluated reservoir storage and determined it had the capacity to sell 10-acre feet without significant impact to the water company or its customers. According to Ekker’s email the conservation district General Manager Tyler Ivins requested the city sell the district 10 acre-feet to sell to their industrial users as the district reportedly had no water to sell of their own. Citing seepage, evaporation, and stock taps, staff determined it would benefit Blanding water more to sell the 10-acre feet than to retain it since Recapture will be down into the conservation pool at the end of the season and the city will not be able to save it for next year. Staff also noted that since the conservancy district planned to resell to ready mix concrete businesses Holliday Construction and Sonderegger Inc.

Staff believes the sale would benefit local development in the community, such as Sunrise Outfitting construction, the remodel of the old Shopko building for the USU extension, and the Utah Food Bank project. “David Lyman and I evaluated where we are at with respect to reservoir storage and felt like we would be able to let go of 10 AF without any significant impact to our water company. Keep in mind this water will be gone either way at the end of the season.”

Ekker added, “I truly felt that this was a win-win for all stakeholders or I never would have made the recommendation.” Ekker also said **Johnson** and City Finance Director Kim Palmer concurred with his decision. **Johnson** added that it was his understanding that the sale would be presented to council as part of an administrative report.

Regardless, the city council expressed a desire to implement a policy to have them act as a pass-through for future water purchases and sales. City Council member Cheryl Bowers added, “We are the people that are responsible to our citizens and I don’t believe that decision is a decision that should be made lightly.”

Johnson added his agreement, “we need to figure out some sort of structure with the purchase and sell of water. What is administratively able to do versus what then needs to trigger to come to the council.”

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San Juan Record (UT)
April 19, 2022

Blanding water citation due to computer failure

Author: Admin

Members of the Blanding City Council received an explanation of a notice to water customers at their latest meeting. During their April 12 meeting, Blanding City Council received an explanation as to why residents received a notice regarding a violation of drinking water standards.

City Engineer Terry Ekker explained during the first two weeks of January and the first two weeks of February a computer hard drive failure meant the city was unable to record collected data about the cities drinking water. The city reports that the water produced met all drinking water standards, however, the records were not available to report to the Division of Drinking Water for January 1-13 and February 1-17.

The city is required to monitor and report turbidity, water flows, membrane treatment performance, chlorine, pH, and temperature daily to then be reported to the state. With the system failing they were required to send out a notice to residents about their drinking water.

Ekker explained that the city was monitoring the water at the time they were just unable to report those numbers. "The quality of the water never changed. There was never any concern with that."

City Manager **David Johnson** summarized that the violations were regarding reporting, not a violation of contamination. The council also approved their standard agreement with the Utah Fire Forestry and State Lands, spelling out reimbursement for any water the agency takes from Recapture to fight fires in the area.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
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San Juan Record (UT)
March 30, 2022

Blanding approves Westwater water project

Author: Kate Boyle

Blanding City Council met twice last week to purchase an acre of land and approve a contract for the Westwater water project. Earlier this year Blanding city was awarded a principal forgiveness loan of \$380,984 from the Utah Division of Drinking Water for the purpose of designing and engineering a new deep well. The well is meant to provide additional water sources to Blanding in order to serve the Westwater community.

Westwater, a community of about 30 homes on Navajo Nation-owned land just outside of Blanding, does not currently have access to culinary water. The projects to bring water and electricity to Westwater has been funded in most part by the state of Utah through the legislature, with contributions from the Utah Navajo Trust Fund and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

The City of Blanding has not paid directly for the project, but City Engineer Terry Ekker has been involved as the city has been a partner by providing power and water to the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority to then provide the utilities to residents of Westwater.

At the March 22 meeting, the Blanding City Council approved a contract with a local engineering firm for the well. The well will be dug on property adjacent to the Blanding City water treatment plant and will be treated by the city.

Councilmember Erik Grover expressed concerns about a television interview where Utah Lt. Governor Deidre Henderson mentioned finding grants and loans for Blanding to fund the project. Grover said, “I will not vote for a loan for the city unless we’re willing to provide water to every home on this mesa.” City Manager **David Johnson** reported that communication with the city and Lt. Governor has been clear on the matter.

Ekker also explained the principal forgiveness loan is really a grant. Ekker said the project is structured so that the state Division of Drinking Water will reimburse the city each month for that period’s expenses related to the Westwater water project. While the state offered up to \$380,000 for the design engineering services, the actual contract to Jones and DeMille Engineering was awarded at \$326,000 by the city council.

Councilmember KD Perkins, Len Gasser and Kellen Nielson voted to approve the contract, while Councilmember Grover abstained from the vote. Councilmember Cheryl Bowers was not present at the March 22 meeting. The council also approved a five-year contract for airport engineering services with Armstrong Consulting Engineers out of the Grand Junction, CO office. Armstrong has been the engineering consultant for the city for over twenty years.

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Last week the city council also approved purchase of land that neighbors the city's shop facility. In a special meeting on Thursday, March 24, the council approved the purchase of the one acre parcel near the corner of 550 N and 600 W for the price of \$50,000. The acre on a vacant lot to the west of the city property will allow the city to expand their facilities if needed.

The purchase was approved unanimously by the city council, excluding Councilmember Perkins who was not present at the March 24 meeting.

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<https://www.iheart.com/content/2021-08-11-this-utah-town-is-about-to-get-electricity-for-the-first-time-ever/>
August 11, 2021

This Utah Town Is About To Get Electricity For The First Time Ever

Author: Ginny Reese

One small community in Utah is about to get electricity for the first time ever! 2 KUTV reported that the small community of Westwater, just outside of Blanding, has never had running water or metered electricity. Westwater is owned by the Navajo Nation, but it isn't part of the reservation. The plan to bring power to the are was made possible by cooperation and funding from several different groups. The lights should be turned on by the end of the year.

Albert Cly, a resident of Westwater, told KUTV, "All these people out here's going to be pretty happy when they turn that switch on, see all that brightness in their houses, and turn their TV on." Cly said that he first moved to the town in 1948 when he was a child. He once worked in Salt Lake City, but returned to the community 18 years ago. People in the nearby community of Blanding have electricity and running water. Cly said, "People over there can take a shower every day. And out here we have to just go down there to get. bucket of water to take a sponge bath."

So what took so long to get the new amenities in the town?

According to **David Johnson**, Blanding city manager, it was jurisdictional dilemmas and funding. Johnson said, "Prior to this it's been, who's going o fund it? Who's going to build it? That's a difficult question to answer in small communities, in rural communities."

The project is now being funded by the Utah Navajo Trust Fund, the state of Utah, and The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

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San Juan Record (UT)
August 3, 2021

Blanding considers Wellness Center fire plan

Author: David Boyle

An update on the Blanding Wellness Center fire suppression sprinkler system, preserving a historic building, and plans to possibly increase city involvement in a nuclear power plant were all items of discussion at the July 27 meeting of the Blanding City Council.

Several months ago, City Manager **David Johnson** discovered that the Blanding City-owned San Juan Wellness Center has a listed occupancy capacity of 299 people, which is low for the size of the building. In further conversations with the state fire marshal, the city discovered the occupancy is low because the building does not have a fire sprinkler system.

Along with that discovery, the city also learned that if an accident or fire were to occur at the Wellness Center and more than 299 people were in the building, the hazardous event would not be covered by insurance and the city could be liable for other injuries. Council and staff have since been at work determining how and when to implement any needed updates to the center. At the July 27 meeting of the council, **Johnson** reported the city had received a few additional estimates for the fire suppression sprinkler system, which fell generally in line with earlier provided estimates.

While **Johnson** reports they've received bids in the \$100,000 range, that does not include the cost for new alarms, underground connections, or patchwork. **Johnson** says they are still likely looking at anywhere between \$200,000 and \$400,000 to do the whole project. While Blanding City has funds adequate to cover the costs to install the system, city staff had previously asked if the council wants to hold off on planned upgrades to other parks and recreation systems.

The city council advised the staff to move forward with a planned shade structure at Centennial Park and a park pavilion installation. At their latest meeting, staff reported those items are moving forward as requested.

At their July 13 meeting, the council asked the staff to compile a list of facility uses that exceed the 299-person occupancy limit to see if the use justified the upgrade. That report was provided at the July 20 meeting. Blanding staff reports that events including youth volleyball and basketball tournaments, league nights, and the annual Tree for All event exceed the listed capacity an estimated 17 days every year.

Non-city entities also use the Wellness Center beyond its capacity throughout the year. This may include company Christmas parties, end of school year parties, the ATV Safari, and sportsman banquets, as well as other events that total 12 days annually. In all, the city estimates that events surpass the building capacity 29 days a year. The information gathered helps solidify the city's need to install the new fire suppression system. The discussion has also primed the city to revisit

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
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their recreation agreement with the San Juan School District. The agreement allows the two entities to share facilities between programs.

Johnson, school district Business Manager Tyrel Pemberton, city Recreation Director David Palmer, and Blanding school principals and athletic directors will meet to revisit the recreation agreement.

Also at the July 27 meeting, the Blanding council heard from Winston Hurst of the San Juan Historic Preservation Commission about a historic building known as the Swallow’s Nest. The stone structure near the Blanding Visitor Center was built in 1925 by Albert R Lyman as a one-room study. Lyman was the “Old Settler” of Blanding. The Swallow’s Nest is owned by the City and was placed on the National Register for Historic Places in 1996.

Hurst reported that efforts to preserve the small building run into a consistent issue – water running into the cabin has caused the floor to rot away. The moisture is dissolving sandstone at the bottom of the cabin walls.

One source of water into the cabin is the city sprinkler system on the east side of the visitor center park. Hurst says the slope causes water to run into the cabin. Hurst advocated terminating the sprinkler system on the easternmost 50 feet of lawn and replacing it with a natural landscape. “My role here is to bring attention to this and make sure everybody is aware that it really is a fairly serious thing out there if we’re serious about keeping that cabin,” said Hurst.

The Historic Preservation Commission also pledged their support to aid the city as they preserve the cabin. Staff committed to take a look at the area and explore solutions to preserve the cabin. The council also received another update on the Carbon Free Power Project. As a power utility provider, Blanding City is one of several members of city-owned utility systems in the West that are investing in the nuclear power project near Idaho Falls, ID. It is scheduled to come online in 2030.

Staff recommended, and the council expressed interest in, creating a resolution to increase the city buy-in from 2 to 2.5 kilowatts. City staff will bring back a resolution to increase the buy-in at their August 10 meeting.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
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San Juan Record (UT)
May 5, 2021

Blanding City Council welcomes volunteer effort to replace dirt at ball fields

Author: David Boyle

More than a dozen Blanding residents have sent letters in the past few months asking that the infield dirt be replaced at the city ball fields in Centennial Park. The dirt has reportedly never been replaced, which is suggested every so often in part for safety reasons.

When Recreation Director David Palmer presented an estimate to the city council, the costs came in higher than anticipated. Since that time Palmer has researched and applied for grants. In the meantime, Blanding resident Jimmy Johnson met with Palmer, Council member Kellen Nielson, and City Manager **David Johnson** to look at some quicker alternatives.

At the April 27 city council meeting, **David Johnson** explained the city is constrained by budget, but Jimmy Johnson floated the idea of getting items donated, which would speed up the process and cut a lot of red tape.

As a result, community members are volunteering to donate time, resources and funding to cover the costs to replace the infield dirt. The council gave legitimacy to those efforts by providing consent to move forward with the project.

As a result, in the near future, probably in about a month, Palmer will provide an outline of the plan including the detail of the work to be done, where funding and resources will come from, and an outline of how much the city might be asked to contribute to the project.

David Johnson explained that the city will work to have future needs planned in advance so they can fall within the city budget. “We should have been planning for this,” said **Johnson**. “That’s why when I first got here I said we really need to focus on all of our departments creating long-term master plans and capital plans so that we can know, oh in five years, we need to save up for new baseball dirt, or for new sand in the filter for the pool or whatever the case might be.”

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

San Juan Record (UT)
December 8, 2020

New Blanding City Manager and family are excited to get started

Author: McKall Adams

David Johnson is moving to Blanding with his family from Saratoga Springs, UT to work as the newly appointed Blanding City Administrator. He brings 13 years of experience in management, economic development, recreation, budgeting, and public engagement.

His background includes experience in the private, non-profit, and public sectors. He earned a Master's of Public Administration from the University of Utah and a B.A. in Communications from Brigham Young University.

Johnson currently works as the Economic Development and Public Relations Director for the City of Saratoga Springs. In this role, he brought Costco to the city, updated the park and trails masterplan, and worked with public safety officials to evacuate 13,000 residents during a wildfire this summer. He is also a member of several professional organizations and teaches in the School of Communications at BYU.

Prior to Saratoga Springs, **Johnson** worked for Haines City, FL and Bountiful City, UT. His experience with these cities includes preparing annual budgets, updating city code, establishing regional cooperatives, and addressing issues with invasive deer and environmental approvals for new businesses.

Johnson's career originally began with a public relations firm, focused on government contracts. He also worked in non-profit executive management, events, and grant writing.

Johnson and his wife, Corrine have been married for nearly 14 years. They have four children ranging in age from middle school to pre-school.

Corrine Johnson has an undergraduate degree in Biology from Utah State University and went to the University of Utah to become a Registered Nurse. She has been a nurse for over eight years, with vast experience at the U of U Hospital, VA Hospital, hospice, and also teaches for BYU instructing nursing students on Intensive Care.

Both David and Corrine are avid runners who enjoy running marathons. They are also outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy hiking and camping with their family. They share their insights on their personal blogs at www.theaveragejoerunner.com and www.outdoorfamfun.com.

Mayor Joe B. Lyman said, "Dave comes with a broad base of proven experience ranging from economic development; land use; human resource; utility billing including water, parks and recreation; planning; budgeting; and so on.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
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“When I called his personal references I got more than a good reference. I got an extensive conversation about Dave and how he could benefit Blanding City,” Lyman added. “He and his family have been looking for a rural area to settle in and call home. I am confident they will make a great addition to our community. I look forward to working with him.”

The **Johnsons** expressed that they are looking forward to putting down roots and being part of a tight-knit community. They are also excited about the outdoor opportunities southeastern Utah offers. **Johnson** explained that during the interview process it became very apparent how much the Mayor and the City Council of Blanding care for their community and residents. Because of this, he and his family are looking forward to being part of such a community.

Johnson is the son of a 20-year military veteran. When asked what excites his family the most about moving to Blanding **Johnson** said, “Growing up in the military I became used to moving for occupational needs. I am most looking forward to putting down roots and being part of a community – for my children to be able to go to school from junior high to graduation.” He added, “I also feel like this community will give my kids a better opportunity as they learn and grow to help and serve others.”

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

KSL TV 5
July 28, 2020

One-third of Saratoga Springs evacuated due to fast-moving wildfire

Author: Jared Turner

Around 3,100 homes in Saratoga Springs have been evacuated because of the fast moving Knolls Fire that broke out south of the city. Officials said some homes have sustained damages. City spokesperson **David Johnson** said the evacuations impacted over 13,000 people, which is about a third of the population.

Residents in the Lake Mountain Estates and Pelican Bay neighborhoods were first asked to evacuate as flames moved cover to the area. Fire officials later expanded the evacuation orders to all homes south of Grandview Boulevard on the west of Redwood Road. Those residents have been advised to head to Westlake High School in Saratoga Springs. The fire started around 2 p.m. Sunday.

Officials from the Utah Community Emergency Response Teams (Utah CERT) said the Knolls Fire was threatening structures Sunday afternoon on the south side of the city. Chief Jess Campbell with the Saratoga Springs Fire Department said the evacuations initially impacted around 100 homes. High winds, smoke and dust made the conditions difficult for firefighters. Air support was called off because of strong winds. Aerial crews were not expected to return to the area until at least Monday morning.

Utah CERT said the fire was behaving erratically in heavy winds with gusts of 40 to 50 mph moving through the area. State fire officials reported a wind gust of 57 miles per hour. They said the smoke and dust made it challenging to contain the fire. Redwood Road was closed going south at the spot of the fire. Chief Campbell said there were flames on both sides of Redwood Road. Details about how the fire ignited or how close flames have come to the structures were not available.

A shelter was first established at a building of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at 2947 South Swainson Avenue. With the additional evacuation, officials asked people to move to Westlake High School at 99 North 200 West. Any who goes to the school has been asked to bring face masks and maintain social distancing.

Chief Campbell said the Red Cross had been preparing for around 1,000 people impacted by the fire, though that number increased dramatically in a short amount of time. A declaration of local emergency was issued in the city of Saratoga Springs shortly after 8:00 p.m. Sunday.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
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<https://kslnnewsradio.com/1928230/saratoga-springs-hopes-to-prevent-future-traffic-jams-in-possible-evacuations/>
June 20, 2020

Saratoga Springs hopes to prevent future traffic jams in possible evacuations

Author: Paul Nelson

City leaders in Saratoga Springs acknowledge they need more roads getting out of town. Some evacuees from the Knolls Fire tell KSL it took hours from them to get out of the restricted area because of traffic jams on Redwood Road. However, the city working to create more ways to get out in case of an emergency.

Officials know Redwood is the only road leading north and south out of Saratoga Springs, and they understood traffic would be at a dead stop if they evacuated thousands of people all at once. So, they staggered the orders as best they could. City Spokesman **David Johnson** says, “The homes in the most danger at first were evacuated first.”

Considering there was only one major road for thousands of residents, **Johnson** believes the evacuation went as well as it could have. “In this emergency situation and this evacuation, things went very smoothly. Yes, it took time to get people out, but we were able to get people out in a timely manner and a safe manner,” he says.

Even after the evacuation orders were lifted, **Johnson** asked all non-residents to stay out of the southern portion of Saratoga Springs and the Lake Mountain area. He says they didn’t want traffic to get any worse for people who wanted to come back home. He says they’ve been looking into expanding and creating new roads for a while, not just for emergencies and traffic jams but to handle the rapid growth in their city. To all the people irked over the fact that there’s only one major road out of Saratoga Springs, Johnson says the city agrees. **Johnson** says, “It’s very important to us, as a city, to get another means for north and south transportation.”

They believe the best option is going to be the Mountain View Corridor, which would tie into Foothill Boulevard. The city is working with developers and landowners to get the proper right of way and build additional infrastructure to speed up the extension. “The Mountain View Corridor has been in discussion for quite some time. It’s something that, as a city, we would like to see completed sooner rather than later because of the transportation needs that we have,” Johnson says.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Daily Herald (UT)
July 16, 2019

Salute to fun: 15 fun things to find at Patriot Park

Author: Kari Kenner

With population numbers leaping exponentially each year in Saratoga Springs and future growth predictions only adding more residential areas, to say there was a need for a new park like Patriot Park in the city is a pretty vast understatement. Just three years ago, the western Utah County boom town had a mere four recreation programs to cater to residents, making the need for something more exceptionally obvious. That's where the idea for the 30-acre park honoring not only America's favorite pastime but also its heroes began.

"The mayor and city council wanted to design Patriot Park to honor our veterans and those who are in military service, and baseball is kind of that all-American sport," said Saratoga Springs Public Relations and Economic Development Director **David Johnson** on the concept for the newly minted city park. "We were in need of our own baseball facility and thought this was a great opportunity to not only provide an extra amenity to our residents but also take the opportunity to honor those men and women in military who have served, especially with our proximity to Camp Williams."

Nearly four years ago, the concept was first cultivated, with the fruits of that labor leading to the April opening of not only a fantastic city park, but also sports complex with up to 100 acres nearby potentially available to accommodate future expansion. So what makes Patriot Park so great? Here are 15 fun things worth noting about the unique new park complex:

Size

One of the most important things to note about Patriot Park is its sheer size. The park consists of a 30-acre complex featuring six baseball/softball fields and eight pickleball courts, not to mention a lofty playground with areas for youth of all ages and parking that wraps around three sides of the park. A series of picnic tables also add to the allure of the complex, making it a great spot to hang out after a morning of playing ball, or even just playing in general, with a handful of netted areas for batting practice lining the walkways and an ample helping of benches. The park also features large, centrally located restroom facilities with ample space for future expansion both of the park itself and of other city amenities.

According to **Johnson**, there's a total 100-acre option on more fields to purchase with such growth already making its way into the city's Master Plan. "There's potential for a new city hall or library if voters vote for it, or a recreation center could go in that area," he said. "We already have the Radio Control Park there and the East Inlet Park where we host soccer games. The old hot springs are there and as the city looks at future funding over the next several years, they're likely to slowly phase and build that area to be central."

A dominant theme

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Not only does Patriot Park allow for a variety of baseball and softball programs, its six ballparks, playground and even common areas all offer tribute to the same patriotic theme. Each ballpark is named after a branch of the military, including a nod to first responders while the complex itself is in the shape of an oversized baseball bat, with bat-shaped light posts, baseball-themed playground equipment (think catcher's mask, mitt, bat and balls) and even a veterans monument at the entry to honor those who have served in the military.

Accolades are already rolling in

If local response to the park isn't indication enough of the quality and effort put into its creation, a second witness would be the response of those who helped to create it. "The contractors we were talking to to help design the plaques said this is one of the best baseball complexes they've ever seen," **Johnson** said. "They've really been impressed with just the quality of the park."

And they aren't the only ones. Playworld, the national company that created the playground equipment for the uniquely themed park, has even taken notice of the things that set it apart, and, according to the city Facebook page, consider it "one of the premier facilities made with their play structures."

The company is actually coming out to photograph the area and use it in its marketing. The community response has also been positive and strong, according to **Johnson**. "We get nothing but great feedback from the community," he said, noting that before the park even opened officially they had people coming in to enjoy it. "It's been nothing but positive response. People are really finding it a fun park. It's a unique park and one that kids enjoy and can play on. It's a lot of fun."

The perfect place to pitch

A majority of the complex goes to the six well-constructed baseball fields that open up the option for community recreation and also community collaboration, with scoreboards sponsored by Pepsi. "One of the things we really wanted to do was make this park something that would create a partnership so that we could benefit the residents and we really appreciate Pepsi. ... We want to recognize and thank them," **Johnson** said.

The giant electronic scoreboards are a highlight of each field, and denote on the back the branch of military the specific area is named after. "They're the 'Navy Field' or 'Army Field,'" **Johnson** said. "We didn't want 'Field 1,' 'Field 2.' We wanted to honor the military. There are military flags at each respective field and the First Responders Field is actually facing toward where the new police and court building will be."

The number of fields, combined with careful planning, spacing and parking options, make it so a variety of games can all take place at once without overcrowding, and covered bleachers will hopefully add a layer of comfort for those who come to watch the games unfold.

Play (pickle)ball

Though baseball is clearly the dominant theme at Patriot Park with a strong nod toward those

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who have served and sacrificed for our freedoms, it's fun to note that it's not the only type of ball you can hit at the complex. A series of eight pickleball courts have also found purchase in the park, due to growing popularity in the community. "It has become really popular among all ages," **Johnson** said of the game, noting that the addition of the courts has brought a wave of positive feedback. "We're getting residents who are just excited for it to be open." Pickleball courts are not yet in high supply in Utah County, so Saratoga Springs' addition of them to Patriot Park is something that can draw visitors from across Utah County to the unique amenity.

A fun spot for kids

Though the ball fields are definitely a large draw for Patriot Park, the unique playground area is probably one of the best features that caters to a need for community members of all ages. "You can tell when you come out to Patriot Park, the whole idea of creating a playground is because when people come out to baseball games and their kids are playing, there is nothing for the other kids to do," **Johnson** said. "We wanted to create a park kids could play at while their siblings were out playing baseball. We wanted to create something fun and whimsical and went with the baseball theme, including an oversized baseball mitt and catcher's mask."

A sea of completely round, giant baseballs embedded into a soft turf also add to the allure of the park, with a variety of slides, climbing equipment and even astroturf to give the feel of being in a ballpark. Though the central location of the playground makes it great for families to access during ball games, it can be a little bit of a hike to the center of the complex for those just seeking the park, especially if they have disabilities. The trek is well worth the end reward, though!

Something for everyone

Though Patriot Park isn't hyped as an all-abilities playground, there's still a lot there for everyone to enjoy, from the smaller playground equipment and slides geared toward younger children to the over-sized baseball-themed features that provide a perfect play area for climbing, sliding and running. The playground is not fully fenced, but its central location between the fields adds a level of safety for anxious parents, while ample benches offer a place for weary adults to rest while they watch their children play.

An obstacle course

Though there's no set start and finish, one of the most alluring features of Patriot Park's unique baseball-themed playground is the obstacle course area, offering a rock climbing wall, net climbing and narrow walkways including a suspended giant rope and trampoline-like path all leading to a central climbing area, essentially providing plenty of places to get up off the ground and move with fun platforms to stop and take a rest on.

Field of dreams

Though they've been mentioned before, one of the most popular features of the new playground is the unique field of giant baseballs naturally dividing the area for smaller children from the larger playground as a whole. A perfect fit for the baseball theme, the textured and turfed area provides chances to climb and run through a series of balls, while enjoying a soft and hilly turf

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that's great for playing.

Catching a fast one

Continuing to focus on the most obviously themed equipment, the catcher's mitt slide is a quick favorite for many visitors to the park. Not only is it just about the perfect size to catch the giant baseballs at the playground, but it also offers a unique climb into a fun-themed tunnel slide unlike anything at any other local playground.

Batter up

Taking the themed fun to the toddler area is a giant baseball bat and ball embedded into the ground of the smaller park, offering a chance to climb, run and play between spins on the small, flat merry-go-round or after bouncing out energy on a pair of bouncing rocker toys.

Multiple structures

Another unique feature of Patriot Park's playground is the fun variety of play structures all loosely connected to each other through ropes, bridges and climbing nets, with the catcher's mask area providing a fun central point with a curved slide and even a unique elevator style feature that carries kids slowly from its upper loft to the ground before automatically returning to the top again. Other structures offer different sizes and varieties of slides, not to mention unique climbing opportunities, from blocks and ropes to spirals and decorative clubhouse-style wood planks.

A new spin

Merry-go-rounds have long been one of the most popular, and most dangerous toys on the playground, offering a fun thrill with the ever present chance to go flying off. Patriot Park in Saratoga offers three styles of the thrill-seeking fun, including a flat, low version in the area for small children, a taller, more classic take toward the side of the main play area by the swings, and a spinning roped ring at the back of the playground where users can sit, stand or hang off at their leisure while the momentum of the initial push carries them around.

Places to perch

From landing pads in the middle of the rope climbing areas to the top of the play structures, another fun feature of the playground is that there are plenty of places to perch and rest, or even gear up for more fun. Smaller fabric pads provide great spots to stop while climbing, as well as a great view of the entire playground.

Something new

One of the most important things to note about Patriot Park's playground is the success that stems from the willingness to try something new. From a small hamster wheel-style spinning toy to uniquely shaped climbing points, the outdoor "elevator" and ample awnings to provide tidbits of shade, no expense or thought was spared in designing a playground that would be fun and different, or as **Johnson** put it, "whimsical." Rather than just your standard set of slides and swings, there's a chance to use a little bit of imagination, and a lot of places to climb, explore and literally have a ball.

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Daily Herald (UT)
May 26, 2019

Saratoga Springs adds new events like pickleball musical mixer to 2019 Splash Days

Author: Michelle Barnes

Between Jedi training and a new "pickleball musical mixer," the city of Saratoga Springs has tried to think of everything and everyone in this year's Splash Days celebration. Activities take place between June 10-15 and kick off at Neptune Park as they have in past years. The chalk walk and concert open the week of festivities with chalk art of all levels covering the sidewalks of the park. Tuesday will bring the animal show and Lance Nielsen Magic for the kids at Neptune Park. Meanwhile, a new pickleball musical mixer will be going on at the new Patriot Park.

David Johnson, spokesman for the city, said, "We are excited to be adding a pickleball mixer to our list of activities for Saratoga Spring's Splash days celebration. This mixer is a great way to get outside, have fun, meet your neighbors, and engage in the events happening during Splash Days." On Wednesday, the Splash Bash will take place at Sunrise Meadows Park, which is a favorite for the little kids. The afternoon activity includes water slides, a water balloon and water gun fight, and the infamous foam and fire truck spraying. Later that evening the city has organized the "Search for Saratoga" which is a competition for couples, families, or friends, with a similar feel to "The Amazing Race." **Johnson** said that in addition to the pickleball mixer, the city added a Star Wars-themed night and a Battle of the Bands competition this year. The Star Wars evening begins with Jedi training for kids ages 5-12. The event invites kids to "join Darth Vader, Luke Skywalker, Rey and Kylo Ren, along with Jedi Knights and Masters for a Jedi Training course. Learn how to hold and fight with a lightsaber!" Following the training will be a battle on stage at the park. Thursday night ends with a costume contest and The Force Awakens at the first family movie night of the season.

Friday will open the Splash Days Boutique with local vendors and at 8 p.m. The Party Crashers will be performing their show in the park. The group consists of seven performers who say they "perform their show all over the world bringing their unique blend of energy, choreography, staging, impersonations, medley's and all-out fun!" They also add, "It's like having Katy Perry and David Guetta crash your party!" Their concert will end with a 9:30 p.m. firework show in the park. Saratoga Splash Days ends Saturday with a day packed full of activities and events. The day kicks off with an early morning volleyball tournament in the park, which participants can register for, along with other sports activities, on the city's sport registration page. At 10 a.m., the parade begins at 1200 North and Foothill Boulevard, turns left onto 400 North, heads east until Thunder Boulevard and ends at Westlake High School. After the parade, the day continues with a car show, boutique, food truck league, battle of the bands, a watermelon eating contest, and ends with a concert featuring the winners from the earlier competition.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
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Deseret News, The (Salt Lake City, UT)
January 30, 2019

Conservation on tap for lawmakers

Author/Byline: Amy Joi O'Donoghue

SALT LAKE CITY - Utah may be able to put its money where its mouth is and get the chance to try to prove locals can manage a forest better than the U.S. Forest Service. The Legislature this session will consider using \$20 million toward the purchase of Tabby Mountain in Duchesne County, picking up a 28,000-acre chunk of land that is premier habitat for elk, deer and big game.

Ashley Green, assistant director of the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, said the property northwest of Duchesne is owned by the School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration, which is accepting letters of interest from potential buyers. Open space conservation, such as the acquisition of Tabby Mountain, water law reform and tackling air pollution are among the top environmental issues likely to surface during the legislative session that kicked off Monday. Utah Gov. Gary Herbert is recommending the purchase of Tabby Mountain in his budget and creating Utah's first state forest.

Top GOP leaders in the state have long complained that federally owned overgrown forests are at the root of increasingly catastrophic wildfire seasons that could be mitigated if Utah could manage those lands. Lawmakers may also pursue buying 2,000 acres of former mining lands in Big Cottonwood Canyon after the current owners indicated a willingness to sell.

Aside from the possible "first forest" for Utah, the state is poised to dive headlong into another first - a law requiring secondary metering of water - if Herbert and Sen. Jacob Anderegg's efforts prove successful. Anderegg, R-Lehi, is running legislation that would require the metering of all new secondary water connections after July 1, 2019, and for existing users by 2030. Herbert is recommending \$22 million to support metering, more informative billing practices and other water efficiency projects. Anderegg's bill, SB52, would require the state Board of Water Resources to make available \$10 million in loans each year through 2030 to water delivery systems transitioning to secondary water metering. "The status quo is untenable when it comes to the growth factor that we totally anticipate will happen in the next 20 to 25 years," he said. "What we have been doing to this point is not sustainable." Some communities already meter secondary water use. Washington Terrace, Anderegg said, saw its consumption rate drop by 38 percent.

In Saratoga Springs, which also implemented pricing to reflect "true cost" of delivery, secondary water consumption decreased by as much as 58 percent, Anderegg said. The move to secondary water metering gained momentum in Saratoga Springs in 2015 after city officials witnessed high irrigation water usage coupled with a rapidly growing population.

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David S. Johnson, city spokesman and economic development director, said the trend was not sustainable. "We knew we had to address this now and get ahead of the curve," **Johnson** said, adding that the behavioral hurdle was more difficult to overcome than the technical implementation of the system. "Culturally, here in Utah, we have used secondary water in an unlimited fashion."

State lawmakers are also expected to take up a trio of controversial bills dealing with surplus water contracts, extraterritorial jurisdiction and a proposal to amend the Utah Constitution to give cities more flexibility over their water supplies. Dozens of volunteers from cities, state agencies, water providers, attorneys and others worked together over the summer in meetings to fine-tune the proposals that may result in some of the most significant changes to water law in more than a century.

Utah residents can also look for new money and possibly new laws in the arena of air pollution, where Herbert has recommended \$100 million infusion of one-time money to tackle the problem. As part of this spending package, Herbert wants Utah state government to pursue implementation of an "action plan" for employees on days when air pollution is moving into the unhealthy, or yellow zone. Such a plan would allow employees to modify normal work routines in favor of telecommuting, mass transit or carpooling. For fiscal year 2019, as a jumpstart, the governor wants \$60,000 for the Utah Department of Administrative Services to pilot a teleworking program for employees with physical workspaces in the Utah State Office Building.

There are a number of ways that \$100 million, if approved, could be spent. Those include more funding for a replacement program for dirty wood-burning stoves and fireplaces. According to the Utah Department of Environmental Quality, there have been more than 1,500 wood-burning stoves and fireplaces in Cache, Utah and Salt Lake counties replaced so far, and there is a waiting list of 2,000 households. About 12,000 people are on the agency's list to change out gas-powered lawn mowers and snowblowers for electric tools.

HEAL Utah, a local advocacy organization, would like to use some of that money for a three-year pilot project for free-fare days on Utah Transit Authority mass transit during a set number of days. Jessica Reimer, a policy associate with the group, said the \$1.2 million program would compensate UTA for the lost revenue and track ridership to see if free mass transit is enough to incentivize people to leave their vehicles parked. The pilot program would take funding from participants like the Utah Legislature, local government and organizations likeUCAIR. "If the data shows it is not actually benefiting anything, you go back to the drawing board."

Rep. Steve Handy, R-Layton, is taking another swipe at providing some state funding to help pay for upgrades to freight switchers in local rail yards. Tearing down and rebuilding one switcher with more pollution-reducing components would result in an 89 percent reduction in nitrogen oxide - a precursor to fine-particulate pollution, and an 88.5 percent reduction in PM2.5, according to an analysis by the Utah Division of Air Quality. Handy wants \$2 million to leverage against federal funding and motivate railroad companies to make the change, which is a significant investment. His bill, HB98, echoes a similar effort he pushed during last year's

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legislative session and would resurrect a popular program that has not had a steady stream of funding since 2015.

The Legislature will also entertain a concurrent resolution urging the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to update its regulations of the freight switchers. Utah has no authority to regulate the rail yard-related emissions and must depend on voluntary efforts by railroad companies.

Rep. Patrice Arent, D-Millcreek, wants to revisit a 2012 law approved in response to an anti-idling ordinance passed by Salt Lake City, eliminating the restrictions lawmakers imposed on cities. "This is a different world than in 2012 when this passed," she said. Gutting those restrictions, such as the requirement motorists receive three warnings before police could issue a citation, gives cities greater flexibility, she added.

In other pollution matters, Rep. Joel Briscoe, D-Salt Lake City, is proposing to take Utah where no state in the United States has gone before in the adoption of a carbon tax. The measure is promoted as revenue neutral, assessing a \$10 per metric ton of carbon dioxide on polluters, i.e., power plants, and in turn cutting the sales tax on grocery store food, elimination of the sales tax on electricity and home heating fuels, and elimination of the corporate income tax on mining and manufacturing businesses. The tax would generate \$500 million for the state, of which \$50 million would go toward local air quality programs and to boost economic development in rural counties.

According to the Carbon Tax Center, no U.S. state has implemented a carbon tax, and Utah is characterized as "very challenging" for its carbon tax readiness. But economist Yoram Bauman, who spearheaded the Washington state carbon tax ballot initiative in 2016, said Utah has a chance to lead out on the greenhouse gas measure and set an example as it jockeys to host the 2030 Winter Olympics. Bauman, who moved to Utah from Washington, is part of the Citizens Climate Lobby pushing the tax.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Daily Herald (UT)
September 22, 2018

Abrupt street closure angers Saratoga Springs residents

Author: Karissa Neely

Some residents are confused and frustrated about a recent road closure in the Harvest Hills neighborhood of Saratoga Springs. Crews from the Utah Department of Transportation closed the corner connection between 800 West and Aspen Hills Boulevard the night of Sept. 5. Traffic traveling west on Aspen Hills Boulevard can now not turn onto 800 West.

According to **David Johnson**, public relations and economic development director for Saratoga Springs, the City Council made the decision in November 2016 to close that intersection once Mountain View Corridor construction commenced. Council members and residents at the time cited traffic concerns about the intersection being so close to Mountain View Corridor. "It was never designed to be a freeway arterial road," said Councilman Stephen Willden, who was also on the council at the time of the decision.

Johnson said the city asked UDOT to delay closing the road until city crews completed 400 West just to the east of the intersection. City crews completed that road last summer, **Johnson** said, with the express goal that it would be an alternative route for residents during Mountain View construction, which is expected to last until late summer or fall of 2019.

The current design for Mountain View Corridor, as found on <https://www.udot.utah.gov/mountainview>, shows the road connecting Eagle Mountain at Pioneer Crossing northward to 2100 North in Lehi. The road skirts to the west around the Harvest Hills neighborhood, with a connection at Harvest Hills Boulevard, and connects into 800 West a bit south of Aspen Hills Boulevard.

"Once it's done, it will be so much better," Willden said of the project. But he also understands the frustration of residents in losing an access point, especially one that allowed the area's teenage drivers back road access to the high school, middle school and elementary school off 800 West and Pony Express Parkway.

Even though the UDOT and the city decided to close the road two years ago, some Harvest Hills residents feel the closure earlier this month was very unexpected. Jeneé Ricks used the Aspen Hills Boulevard and 800 West daily, and was surprised to drive down the road one day to a dead end. "Our kids used to be able to go out that way to get to school, to jobs and their sports. Now we're sending them out with everybody else on Pony Express or Pioneer Crossing," she said. "If they don't have to close it down, what does it hurt to have more access for the neighborhood?"

Ricks and others argue 400 West is not a safe route. Her neighbor, Audrey Barton said that access is trickier to navigate because there is no light at the intersection of 400 West and Crossroads Boulevard. This makes it difficult to turn left, and even adds problems for those

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

going west. "If you have to go west at Crossroads, you have a short time before Pioneer Crossing to get in the left lane to turn left to the schools. You have to cross three lanes of traffic and you only have about 100 yards to do it in, to get to the left lane. I was almost hit the other day," Barton said. "And we're sending our brand-new drivers that way. It's scary."

Brian Ricks, Barton's neighbor and no relation to Jeneé Ricks, understands the need for closing the road, but said it's premature and adds traffic to an already traffic-laden town. "Closing it is fine, but wait until we have another access on the west side at Mountain View Corridor," Ricks said. "All this other traffic we were able to completely avoid, and we now have added to the city's traffic. That decision affects everyone in the city."

Willden said the decision on exactly when to close the Aspen Hills Boulevard/800 West connection was UDOT's. According to John Gleason, spokesperson for UDOT, the decision to close the road was tied to construction crews' safety. Aspen Hills Boulevard sits almost in the middle of the section of Mountain View Corridor between Pioneer Crossing and Harvest Hills Boulevard. "We had to close it at the beginning of our construction there. Because this project will be completed in only a year, crews need to be able work on all sections," Gleason said. "That is now an active construction zone."

Mountain View Corridor will eventually be highway that runs from Interstate 80 in Salt Lake County to State Road 73 in Utah County.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Daily Herald (UT)
July 13, 2018

Dry winter can mean tan lawns in north Utah County

Author: Karissa Neely

Utah had a dry winter, and with very little Utah summer precipitation, county lawns may be suffering. Lehi recently moved its watering restrictions to Phase II for its residents. According to Cameron Boyle, Lehi assistant city administrator, Phase II only allows residential and business watering every other day. Boyle said the city hopes homeowners and businesses would use best watering practices, and water less than every other day where possible.

Boyle said with "the historically low precipitation this past winter and with the recent above normal temperatures" city staff felt it was necessary to move from Phase I watering — which has no restrictions. Phase II restrictions help to spread the water use across the city, and maintain minimum levels of water in local storage reservoirs in case of fire. "Watering every other day gives our reservoirs the chance to refill. We're just trying to educate the public on smart watering practices," Boyle said. "We're concerned about using resources responsibly."

Lehi has a Phase III restriction step, which limits watering to just twice a week. "Our hope is we don't get to that point," Boyle said. "If everyone practices the Phase II restrictions, it won't be necessary to get to Phase III."

Boyle said this water restrictions process is a regular occurrence for Lehi. Most summers end up in Phase II restrictions. The only exception to that in recent years was last summer, due to last winter's record snowfalls. "This is a regular progression for the summer, given the dry winter we had. And given the climate we live in, this will be more normal," Boyle added.

All cities in northern Utah County have some sort of water restrictions in place. Eagle Mountain does not allow watering between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. The city does not restrict residents to specific days.

Alpine, Highland, Cedar Hills, Pleasant Grove and American Fork all use an alternating day program based on address, similar to Lehi's. These cities also encourage residents to water during the evening or early morning hours to mitigate evaporation waste.

Saratoga Springs implemented a per-thousand gallon metering system on their pressurized irrigation in 2015. **David Johnson**, public relations and economic development director, said the city chose metering to encourage lower water usage, and it's worked. "Since we started metering secondary water, we've seen — even with our growth — a decrease in water usage," **Johnson** said.

While Saratoga Springs is the only northern city metering pressurized irrigation this way, they may not stay that way for long. Alpine Mayor Troy Stout told residents in a recent city

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

newsletter that "metering for pressurized irrigation is a near certainty for our future."

The northern part of the county — especially in Lehi, Saratoga Springs and Eagle Mountain — is growing almost as fast as builders can construct houses. This growth is turning fallow fields or farmland into developed home sites, requiring water rights, piping and irrigation. That infrastructure and the pumping costs of moving water throughout cities adds significant costs to city budgets, while also tapping into limited water resources.

According to the Division of Water Resources, Utah receives the second-lowest average rainfall of all the United States, but has the highest per capita usage. In addition to city programs, many water conservation programs statewide are also educating the public on responsible water usage, including: a weekly watering guide through slowtheflow.org and conservation tips through the Division of Water Resources.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

ABC4 News Utah
April 19, 2018

Saratoga Springs police investigating death of a baby

Author: Staff Writer

One person has been arrested in connection with the death of a baby. Police say the child was declared dead after they responded to a call Wednesday morning.

“The family of the child are cooperating with our officers as they investigate the circumstances surrounding this case,” said Saratoga Springs Public Information Officer, **David Johnson**.

“Since this case involves an infant-child death, we are handling the investigation with the utmost sensitivity and care out of respect for the family and to ensure the integrity of our investigation.”

Police say there have been no formal charges filed.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Daily Herald (UT)
February 21, 2018

Saratoga Springs council approves economic development plan

Author: Colin Douglas

The Saratoga Springs City Council unanimously approved an economic development strategic plan Tuesday night that aims to create "a full-service community that retains the integrity of Saratoga Springs' lakefront community, while creating regional destinations."

The plan is nonbinding, but it provides a general guide to the development priorities of the City Council. "These are our priorities now," said **David Johnson**, public relations and economic development director, acknowledging priorities may change as the city develops.

The plan includes making the town center the focal point of the community, emphasizing commercial uses around the Pioneer Crossing and Redwood Road area, and envisioning a future transit hub at that area.

It calls for exploring development of a lakefront shopping and entertainment area, with shopping, dining, lodging and recreation along the Utah Lake shoreline and the Jordan River. Plans include water sports, improvements to the historic hot springs and transforming Marina Park into a landmark destination. Consideration is to be given to providing opportunities for appropriate home occupations.

The plan gives highest priority to office and business parks, data centers, hotels, big-box retail stores, shopping centers with 20 or more businesses, family-friendly entertainment, recreational destinations and class-A buildings. Class-A buildings "represent the newest and highest quality buildings in their market" according to the city's definition.

In other business, the council unanimously approved an increase of the impact fee paid by developers for parks and recreation facilities in order to serve the city's growing population. The maximum average fee for parks and recreation has been \$1,800 per new residence. The council raised that to \$2,388, and it will rise gradually annually to an anticipated \$2,825 by 2027.

Impact fees are paid by developers as part of the cost of building permits, as explained by **Johnson**. They are how builders pay a fair share for coming into the city.

An analysis presented to councilmembers explained the need for the increase. The city's current population of nearly 29,000 will grow to near 40,000 — or 38 percent— in five years, and near 55,000 in 10 years according to estimates. That would put considerable pressure on existing parks and recreation facilities.

The city currently has about 2.3 acres of park per resident. That will fall to about 1.2 acres by 2028 unless more parks are built. Only Marina Park and Patriot Park, both under construction,

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will have room to absorb the growth. "We're not trying to make money, we're just trying to cover costs," said Councilman Stephen Wilden, emphasizing that the purpose is to maintain the present level of service. The analysis estimates that the city will need to spend about \$5.6 million on park land and \$1.5 million on trails during the next 10 years.

The council also considered a proposed mountain bike park, to be located on the open space between Sunrise Meadows and the North Fire Station. It would include a beginners, intermediate and uphill trails and a skills track. Amenities could include a pavilion, tables and a bike maintenance station. A playground, basketball court and restroom facilities may also be possible.

According to a staff report to the council, the Westlake High School mountain bike coach has offered assistance from the team to create trails and help with other aspects of the park.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Salt Lake Tribune (UT)
October 6, 2017

Saratoga Springs: No shooting threat at high school, but student brought gun earlier in week

Author: Bob Mims

In the wake of the Las Vegas mass shootings, Friday's social media buzz about a shooting threat at a Saratoga Springs high school caught on like wildfire. Problem was, it was just plain not so.

And, said Alpine School District spokeswoman Kimberly Bird, it didn't help that an unnamed middle school principal added the words "threat of a school shooting" to an email meant to assure his own patrons that there was no danger. "There was not a shooting threat at West Lake High School today and there never was," Bird said Friday.

It apparently all stemmed from an incident involving West Lake High on Tuesday. Bird said that on Monday, a student had brought an undisclosed weapon to school, shown it to some friends, and then took it home. "The student didn't threaten anyone with it," she added, and the incident was, at the time, unknown to school officials.

Indeed, said Saratoga Springs police spokesman **David Johnson**, the male teen's gun was not loaded. "It didn't even have a magazine with it," he added.

It all may have gone unreported had not a fellow student posted a social media text mentioning the incident. Parents of yet another student, seeing the message, came to the high school to report it to the principal. Notified by the principal, Saratoga Springs police officers were on campus Tuesday and contacted the boy suspected of having brought the gun to campus.

Bird said the district's protocols call for a minimum of suspension for student weapon violations. She was not at liberty to identify the student or specify what disciplinary action was taken, but Bird did confirm that "our protocols were followed."

Johnson confirmed that officers were on the high school's campus Friday following up on the incident. No evacuations or other restrictions were in place, however. "But this is a suspected hoax," he stressed. "We have a few officers at the high school today, but it's just a precaution."

The matter remains under investigation, and police have not yet determined what, if any charges, may be brought against the student. The boy's parents reportedly were cooperating fully with both school officials and police.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Fox 13 News Salt Lake City
August 27, 2017

Crews contain seven brush fires in Saratoga Springs; authorities believe fires were intentionally set

Author: Rebecca Green

Firefighters contained seven brush fires in Saratoga Springs Sunday afternoon, and authorities believe the fires were intentionally set.

As of about 3:15 p.m., the city of Saratoga Springs says all seven of the fires have been contained, and five of those fires are completely extinguished. The fires are in the area of Redwood Road, mile marker 22.

As of about 7 p.m., six of the fires were completely out and the final fire was contained. Firefighters will remain on scene through the night to control hot spots.

David Johnson, a public information officer for the city, said there were seven separate fires. Six of them burned about 5 acres together in total, while the seventh fire burned about 100 acres. **Johnson** said the fires came close to homes, but there were no evacuations, injuries or reports of property damage. Fire crews and a helicopter are on scene to extinguish the fires.

Johnson said they believe the fires were intentionally set. Anyone with information about the cause of the fires is asked to call Saratoga Springs Police.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Daily Herald (Provo, UT)
July 7, 2017

Northern Utah County cities' budgets tackle roads, infrastructure, safety and parks
Author/Byline: Karissa Neely

Saratoga Springs

Starting in the northeastern part of the county, Saratoga Springs — with a population of about 25,000 and growing — approved a general fund budget of \$16.6 million.

David S. Johnson, Saratoga Springs public relations and economic development director, said one of the city's major projects is a large sports complex. The city plans to break ground on this \$11 million project in August. The project will include six baseball diamonds, eight pickle ball courts, 12 batting cages, two different playgrounds, five picnic pavilions and concessions and restroom buildings.

The city's secondary water expansion projects already underway will continue in 2018. These drinking water and irrigation water capital projects are needed to support the continued residential growth in Saratoga Springs.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Daily Herald (UT)
June 26, 2017

New Saratoga Springs administrators take the reins

Author: Karissa Neely

Saratoga Springs city officials announced administration changes late last week, with one hire coming internally. Owen Jackson, who was previously the city's public relations and economic development director, was selected as the new assistant city manager. He replaced Spencer Kyle, who served as the assistant city manager for 13 years. Kyle is now director of administrative services for South Jordan. "I am grateful for the opportunity to serve in this new capacity as the assistant city manager," Jackson said in a statement. "I have seen the growth and progress of the city over the last few years and I look forward to what the future holds for the community."

Jackson has 10 years of local government experience, with four of those as Saratoga Springs' public relations and economic development director. As economic director, Jackson oversaw the development of the city's new Community Strategic Plan, worked with developers to bring The Crossing retail park to fruition and served on the Lehi Area Chamber of Commerce Board. Prior to that role, Jackson served as the public relations manager for West Valley City for six years.

David Johnson has been hired as Jackson's replacement, and he started working June 12.

Johnson also has 10 years of public relations, government and management experience. Prior to coming to Saratoga Springs, **Johnson** served as the assistant to the city manager of Haines City, Florida. In that position he created a Strategic Communications Plan, rewrote the city's utility code to increase revenues \$250,000 annually, and worked with businesses and residents in the community.

"I'm excited to join the team in Saratoga Springs and build on the tremendous growth and opportunity currently bursting at the seams in this area," **Johnson** said in a statement. "I look forward to representing this beautiful community and bolster its rich quality of life as we welcome new development and residents to the city."

Johnson is also known locally for his work coordinating public outreach for Utah Lake restoration projects and the Utah Lake Master Plan, quadrupling attendance for the annual Utah Lake Festival, and fundraising for Thanksgiving Point's Museum of Natural Curiosity. He also served as an executive director for the American Cancer Society and the communications manager for Utah Food Bank.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
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<https://fccma.org/2016/11/david-johnson-assistant-to-the-city-manager-city-of-haines-city/>
November 2016

David Johnson, Assistant to the City Manager, City of Haines City

Are you an ICMA member and if so, how long?

Yes. Since 2015

Please describe your areas of formal/advanced education.

Bachelors of Fine Arts, Communications, Brigham Young University
Masters of Public Administration, University of Utah

What got you interested in public service?

I hate to give away my youth, but I first got interested in public service in 3rd grade when I read a children's biography of President George H.W. Bush and his time in World War II. Since then I ventured into several areas of public service, but I ultimately found my home in City Management.

What is your current occupation?

I currently work for the City of Haines City, FL as the Assistant to the City Manager.

Please give a brief job description.

The Assistant to the City Manager role in Haines City is somewhat of a utility player. I work on initiatives by the City Commission or City Manager, and assist several departments with special projects. A few projects include rewriting the Utility Billing Code of Ordinance and RFQ's for city-wide continuing services; tracking down ownership of blighted properties; managing press releases, social media and public relations; developing a three to five year strategic communications plan; and filling in as the Interim Parks and Recreation Assistant Director for six (6) months as well as an Associate Planner for two (2) months.

Please describe your typical day.

There is no such thing as a typical day. I have my routines of responding to e-mail, checking to-do lists and scanning the news every morning. From there, each day is a broad range of responding to citizen inquires, conducting policy research and analysis, attending meetings and working on any assignments directed my way.

What is your favorite part of the job?

My favorite part of the job is the variety each new day presents. I love problem solving. I love when it seems like the deck is stacked against you, but somehow you manage to find a way to make it work and get it resolved. I also truly enjoy helping residents who come in frustrated or upset over something and then helping them walk away feeling heard and resolved. It can definitely be exhausting, and some people never walk away happy, but I believe most people just want to be heard and have concerns resolved. I think public servants provide an excellent outlet to help citizens resolve whatever issues be on their minds.

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What is your least favorite part of the job?

I think my least favorite thing is something that exists in every position and in every organization—complaining. Nothing ruins moral, nor stagnates negativity longer than complaining. There is value in airing frustrations, but move on and seek solutions. “Spending today complaining about yesterday won’t make tomorrow any better.” – Unknown

What is your most memorable experience on the job?

I have had several memorable moments in Haines City, but I think that my most memorable moment was during a City Commission meeting when we honored the Alumni of the former Oakland High School. The Alumni Association worked diligently to have their former High School recognized by changing the name of a City Parks and Recreation complex where the former High School once stood. After changing the name of the building and honoring the alumni during a City Commission Meeting, I had the privilege of also recognizing an Alumni member who led the charge for the name change by wearing the school’s colors (orange and green) at every City Commission meeting until the name was changed. After presenting her with a plaque for the Alumni Association, as well as flowers and a certificate for her personal efforts, she gave me a big hug and said, “Oh **David**, I love you. Thank you so much.” That was a rewarding moment.

What are hobbies/interests?

I’m an outdoorsman and love sports. I’m a runner, a cyclist, (I try to be a swimmer), and most anything that includes the outdoors. I also play the guitar, sing and write all of my own music (when I can find time). More importantly, I devote most of my time to my wife, three children and faith in God.

If you could give one piece of advice to young people interested in a career in public service, what would it be?

Every skillset is needed in public service, but every part of public service requires working with the public. If you go into public service, make sure that you enjoy helping and serving the community.

Who were your mentors and how have you passed this information down to other young public administrators?

I have had several mentors professionally. Rather than name them all, I will say that my mentors have ranged from City Managers to Department Directors and Staff. I try to glean information, lessons and feedback from those who have more expertise in areas than I do.

Have you always been in the public sector or have you had experience in the private sector?

I started my career working for a public relations firm for nearly three (3) years. We focused primarily on government contracts. I worked on events and projects involving transportation, wildlife, and water resources. However, I also managed projects for two (2) oil refineries and two (2) pipelines, working closely with surrounding municipalities, media and the community. From there I went into non-profit management, writing grants for a campus of museums, managing communications for a statewide food bank and eventually serving as a District

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Executive Director for the American Cancer Society. During this time, I also managed and consulted two (2) consecutive campaigns for a state representative in Utah who beat out a 21-year incumbent. However, after spending time in non-profit management and politics, I realized that my real passion was serving in the public sector. So I went out on a limb, quit my job as an Executive Director and did an executive fellowship under the City Manager of Bountiful, Utah. This fellowship eventually led me to my current role as the Assistant to the City Manager in Haines City, FL.

What career would you pick if you were to pick another?

Most likely a high school teacher.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Ledger (FL)
October 5, 2016

Hurricane Matthew cancellations

Author: John Chambliss

LAKELAND — Polk County officials closed schools for two days and shelters are expected to open this afternoon to prepare for Hurricane Matthew, a Category 3 storm expected to bring wind gusts of 55 mph to the county. County officials announced Wednesday schools will be closed today and Friday for its 100,000 students in anticipation of tropical storm winds expected to begin this afternoon and last nearly 24 hours in some parts of the county.

A tropical storm warning was issued for Polk County Wednesday morning with alerts that winds of 30 to 40 mph and gusts as high as 55 mph were expected from late today through Friday evening, said Dustin Norman, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service. Matthew had top sustained winds of 120 mph Wednesday and was heading toward the Bahamas at a speed of 12 mph. Matthew dropped from a Category 4 to a powerful Category 3 storm, with sustained winds of 130 mph, but some models had the storm reaching a Category 4 again when it was expected to reach the east coast of Florida.

Landfall and where hurricane-force winds will hit is difficult to predict, Hurricane Center Deputy Director Ed Rappaport said at 5 p.m. Wednesday, but at minimum tropical storm-force winds are expected along Florida's Atlantic coast, as well as a storm surge and heavy rainfall. Gulf coastal areas south of the Suwannee River are also under storm watch. Polk County officials urged residents to make sure they have adequate supplies of necessary medications and, if necessary, evacuation or shelter plans for families and pets.

Pete McNally, the county's emergency management director, said the tropical storm warning prompted the county to announce it will open its special-needs shelter at the Polk County Health Department in Bartow at 1255 Brice Road. In addition, the county plans to open shelters for residents at Alta Vista Elementary, 801 Scenic Highway in Haines City, Ridge Community High, 500 Orchid Drive in Haines City and Spook Hill Elementary, 321 Dr. J. A. Wiltshire Ave E. in Lake Wales. County officials aren't requiring residents to evacuate, but McNally said if people feel uncomfortable staying at home in those conditions the shelter will be available.

Tom Phillips, executive director of Citrus Connection, said bus drivers are organizing three runs to pick up the elderly and those with health-care needs.

McNally said that, based on the track of the storm, he would expect to open other shelters throughout the county this afternoon. McNally said it's the first time schools have closed for more than a day for a storm since 2004 when Hurricanes Charley, Frances and Jeanne ripped through the county. That year, schools were closed for 14 days.

The 2004 storms were responsible for the worst natural disaster in Polk County history, with

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(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

more than \$1.2 billion in property damage from the three storms. Polk County has not experienced a hurricane since 2004, though Tropical Storm Fay in 2008 traveled through Central Florida and damaged homes in Polk. Schools nearly closed for Fay but the eye of the storm drifted away from Polk before it struck. In 2005, school closed for day for Hurricane Wilma, which caused minimal damage in the county.

This afternoon, the storm is expected to come within 20 miles of Florida as a Category 3 system near West Palm Beach, Norman said. "There are some models that bring it just in, and some bring it slightly east," Norman said. Norman cautioned Polk residents that the area could receive hurricane-force winds. "The center of the storm could take a westward track," Norman said. "Polk is still in the cone of the uncertainty."

McNally said he expected more wind than rain from the storm, with the eastern side of the county receiving most of the heavy winds. He said portions of the county are expected to receive 2 to 4 inches of rain. Lake Hamilton and Frostproof have closed administration buildings for Friday while other cities are talking with Polk County officials before making a decision. For the moment, Auburndale, Winter Haven, Bartow, Republic Services are sticking to normal trash pickup schedules.

"We're waiting until (today) to see whether the storm takes a turn," **David Johnson**, Haines City's assistant to the city manager, said Wednesday. "We'll probably wait until (this) morning to make a decision on whether to close City Hall or cancel our City Commission meeting."

Many cities have set up sandbag locations. Notable locations include the Lake Wales, Lake Alfred, Auburndale, Davenport and Dundee fire departments. Lake Wales has sand to fill the bags at a CSX facility, 450 N. Scenic Highway. Winter Haven has two locations: the Chain of Lakes Complex at 210 Cypress Gardens Blvd. SW and Fire Station No. 2 at 4700 State Road 544 N.

Joel Ivy, general manager at Lakeland Electric, said he is more concerned with high winds. A crew of 90 line workers is ready to repair any downed power lines that occur during the storm, and Ivy said he expected some already rain-soaked trees to topple onto lines during the storm. "With good steady winds, trees tend to take overhead lines down and the roots can dig up underground lines," Ivy said. Unless there is an emergency, such as a fire caused by a fallen line, Ivy said line crews will wait to work on downed lines until sustained winds are below 35 mph.

City officials in Lakeland said electric workers are notified within seconds of 90 percent of all outages in its coverage area. Still, any of the 125,000 Lakeland Electric customers are urged to call 863-834-4248 if they lose power.

Customers can sign up for outage notifications online allowing them to receive texts or emails. The notifications tell them their power was interrupted and a follow-up email notifies them

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power was restored.

Tampa Electric customers can report outages to 1-877-588-1010, online at tampaelectric.com/outages or by texting "OUT" to 35069. Customers can also monitor the outage map at tampaelectric.com/outagemap. Duke Energy customers can report outages to 1-800-228-8485, online at duke-energy.com or by texting "OUT" to 57801.

The Salvation Army of East Polk County is collecting nonperishable items and water, and asking for volunteers to help with disaster relief. The nonprofit branch could deploy people to the East Coast to assist there. The Salvation Army expects to be able to provide aid for more than 1,000 people. For more information or to volunteer, visit the Salvation Army, 320 Ave. T NW, or call 863-294-7493.

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[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **David E. Johnson** is listed below.]

Polk News Sun (Bartow, FL)
June 1, 2016

SFSC recognizes students for academic excellence

Author: Unknown

Assistant to city manager joins FPRA

David S. Johnson, assistant to the city manager of the city of Haines City, was introduced to members of the Dick Pope/Polk County chapter of the Florida Public Relations Association during its monthly professional development meeting on May 18 at the Cleveland Heights Golf & Country Club in Lakeland.

The Dick Pope/Polk County chapter is one of 15 professional chapters of Sarasota-based FPRA, the nation's oldest public relations professional organization.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Ledger (FL)
May 6, 2016

Haines City dance team to perform in Dolly's Homecoming Parade

Author: Mike Ferguson

More than 20 local dancers will be performing alongside one of country music's legends this evening in Tennessee. The 22 girls from 12 to 18 years old from Haines City's Studio C School of Dance will be performing tonight in the 31st annual Dolly's Homecoming Parade. "We've had an amazing year," said Marcia Legg, owner and dance instructor of Studio C. "I'm just so proud of these girls." The Pigeon Forge event tends to draw more than 50,000 spectators, with Dolly Parton being the parade's grand marshal. The event features decorative floats, dance teams and marching bands with the Great Smoky Mountains serving as the backdrop. This, however, isn't the first marquee event that Studio C has been involved in. In January, dancers performed in the main lounge of a Carnival cruise ship. Studio C dancers also have performed in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City on three occasions and danced in a Broadway performance of the "Nutcracker" less than a decade ago.

"She's always looking for events to highlight the talent we have right here in Haines City," **David Johnson**, assistant city manager, said of Legg. "She's always a delight and cheerful and happy to see the kids." **Johnson's** 7-year-old daughter, Leah, takes ballet and jazz at Studio C. **Johnson** said the studio provides more than just dance lessons. "The great thing about Studio C is they're not only teaching our kids how to dance, but to be a part of the community as well," **Johnson** said. "(Legg) is welcoming to kids from all walks of life. They make it fun and it's really had a positive impact."

Jo Anna Padgett once took dance class at Studio C and now her two daughters, Lucy, 4, and Elly, 8, are doing likewise. Padgett said she looks forward to the day where her daughters can partake in something like Dolly's Homecoming Parade. Padgett said she never had such an opportunity while she was dancing, but her older sisters went to New York and performed on cruise ships with Studio C. "For my older sisters, it was a life experience," she said. "They had never been to New York or on a cruise ship, so this was a great opportunity for them as teenagers."

The studio has more than 100 students coming from a variety of social and economic backgrounds. Legg said the differences are something the students seem to celebrate. "I've never seen a group of kids that are so supportive of one another," Legg said. "I've had the most amazing year of students. These kids, they love one another." Padgett said much of that has to do with the way Legg runs her class. Padgett said Legg goes out of her way to challenge the students and tries to make sure they regularly work on routines with new people. "She teaches so much about dance, but one of the things that drew me back to her was she found the best in each child," Padgett said. "Her end-of-the-year recitals always have a theme and they're so well done and Marcia makes it so affordable. I really would not want my girls dancing for anyone else." Dolly's Homecoming Parade will begin at 6 p.m. and will stream live on Dolly Parton's Facebook page as well as the Lumberjack Adventure Dinner and Show Facebook page.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Ledger (FL)
October 19, 2015

City staff proposing late fee, earlier cut off for utilities in Haines City

Author: Madison Fantozzi

The city’s utility customers may soon see changes to the billing process.

In an effort to lower the number of customers whose utilities are cut off for nonpayment each month, city staff is proposing a late fee and shortening the amount of time customers have to make their payments before their utilities are stopped. “We’ve enabled our customers for too long,” City Manager Jonathan Evans said. “We’ve allowed them to build up debt that becomes too much of a burden — a hole they can’t get out of.”

Then the city has to write it off; \$380,000 in the last five years, according to Finance Director Donald Carter. The city cuts off 600 to 800 customers a month — about 7 percent of its 11,000 customers — after 45 days of delinquent bills.

“We want to lessen the burden on our customers, lessen the labor for our staff and lessen the write off the city has to do,” said **David Johnson**, assistant to the city manager.

In a comparison survey of about 20 municipalities, the average city cuts off before 28 days of delinquency. The number of customers whose utilities are stopped is also much lower — 85 percent of the cities cut off less than 3 percent of their customers. In addition to cutting off their customers sooner, 95 percent of the cities also have late fees.

Haines City staff is proposing a \$15 late fee after the first delinquent bill and cut off after 35 to 40 days of being delinquent. “By us not having these mechanisms in place, there hasn’t been any incentive for customers to pay,” **Johnson** said.

Staff also recommended crediting customers with their deposits after 18 months of good standing as an extra incentive, but commissioners Thursday did not agree with that part of the proposed policy change. There was an unanimous consensus from commissioners for staff to bring the proposal back to them without the good standing policy. Commissioners are expected to vote on the policy changes on Nov. 19. The changes would go into effect Feb. 1. “Right now (the utilities bill) is below the cell phone bill and the cable bill,” **Johnson** said. “It should be top priority and hopefully this corrects behaviors.”

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Ledger (FL)
October 16, 2015

City manager positive about future of Haines City during annual State of the City address

Author: Madison Fantozzi

A fictitious Donald Trump came back from the future in his DeLorean on Thursday to give City Manager Jonathan Evans some insight at the annual State of the City. Played by **David Johnson**, assistant to the city manager, “Trump” told Evans what's next for Haines City: business and economic development. The message from “Trump” was appropriate as Evans delivered the State of the City address at the Haines City-Northeast Polk County Chamber of Commerce's breakfast. “We want to break away from the status quo of focusing on the here and now,” Evans said. “We want to focus on our future.”

Evans has said economic development will be the city's “saving grace” with more than \$450 million in prospective taxable growth. Property values in Haines City rose 8.75 percent from 2014 to 2015, leaving it with \$877.7 million in taxable property value. “It's still down from pre-recession years, but we're on a road to recovery,” Evans told The Ledger on Tuesday.

His address Thursday was one of optimism for the city's future considering a strong foundation that has been laid in the past, as well as just this last year, he said. He touted 2015 accomplishments including completion of Fire Station No. 1; healthcare and pension reform; and an employee compensation plan that brings all 260 employees up to market pay. He also outlined how the city met each of three main goals – personnel, environmental and communication.

Evans hired key staff members including City Clerk Linda Bourgeois, Public Works Director Addie Javed and Assistant Fire Chief Stuart McCutcheon. The city partnered with company BCR Environmental to build a composting facility on what was East Park Complex. And for communication, Evans started his “Take it to the Streets” initiative, where he and his executive team walk the neighborhoods of Haines City and knock on residents' doors for one-on-one conversations. “This is grass-root politicking,” Evans said. “We're going to roll it out to the businesses soon.” The air conditioning at the Lake Eva Banquet Hall wasn't working Thursday, but Evans said it was actually hot because things are heating up in Haines City. Projects next on his list include opening a dog park, restoring the health of Lake Eva and welcoming Balmoral Estates — an estimated \$68 million in property value. “There's a lot of potential here and together we can accomplish more,” Evans said. “It will take all of us beating the drum for Haines City.”

“Trump,” who had just returned from the future, assured there's exciting things ahead for Haines City. Evans had one final question for him, though. “Did you win the presidency?” “Let's just say we now all live in Trumpsylvania,” **Johnson's** character said.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Ledger (FL)
April 20, 2015

City Manager Knocks on Doors to Get Residents Involved

Author: Madison Fantozzi

Results of Haines City's third annual community survey are in, and one finding in particular disheartens City Manager Jonathan Evans. There were 509 respondents to the survey and, of those, 68 percent said they have never attended a City Commission meeting and 10 percent said they never plan to do so. Of the remainder, only 4 percent reported attending a meeting once a month, 7 percent said they attended every three months and 12 percent every six months.

Evans especially wants to target the 10 percent who reported no interest in ever attending a meeting. "That number tells us that there's someone out there who could help us or may have a good idea, but they're telling us they're not interested," Evans said. "Without civic engagement, there are problems we can't overcome," he added. "How can we get them to care?"

Well, he's taking it to the streets.

Evans and **David Johnson**, assistant to the city manager, knocked on doors Thursday to introduce themselves to residents — a tactic they say they hope opens communication between residents, staff and elected officials. "I'm going to bring the commission meetings to you," Evans said.

Johnson, who has a background in public relations, started his job March 30. He said he wants residents to know him and the city manager on a first-name basis. "We want them to want to communicate with us," **Johnson** said. They knocked on Mitch Gordon's door on Baker Avenue about 10 a.m.

Gordon, 70, hadn't previously met Evans or **Johnson** and said he's never attended a commission meeting. But that didn't mean he lacked constructive criticism for the team. "He asked for suggestions of things that need improvement, and I gave him some," Gordon said.

Gordon said he'd like to see recycling on his street. He commended Evans and staff members for improvements made to Lake Eva and the downtown area but said trees need to be trimmed and power lines cleared up.

Gordon said he's happy with Haines City overall, though, and was happy to get a visit from the city manager. "It's quite possible he could increase civic engagement this way," Gordon said. "It's good to see a city manager this active."

Most residents who took the survey reported that they're satisfied with the direction Haines City is going. But there were some contradictions.

"The survey shows that residents historically prioritize in order: public safety, public works,

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

utilities, leisure services and development services," **Johnson** said. "However, what people want to see ... in the next three to five years is job creation and economic development." He said development services create jobs and economic growth, but residents must not understand that because they ranked those services dead last.

In response to another survey question, respondents prioritized building an attractive community right below public safety and 81 percent agreed or strongly agreed with city efforts to add sidewalks, bike paths, recreational trails and bus shelters.

But leisure services ranked second to last. "These results tell us that residents are not connecting leisure services with building an attractive community," **Johnson** said.

Johnson and Evans said they hope their door-to-door efforts not only engage residents, but also educate them about these connections. Of the 509 who completed the online survey, 447 were either permanent or seasonal Haines City residents.

The rest were nonresidents who Evans suspects have an interest in the city because they live in unincorporated Polk County or neighboring cities.

The city's population is about 21,000 residents in its 19 square miles. "We can't be on every street every single moment," Evans said, "but tell us what your concerns are."

The City Commission meets the first and third Thursdays of each month at 620 E. Main St. There's typically a workshop at 6:30 p.m. followed by a regular meeting at 7 p.m. "You don't have to wait every two weeks, either," Evans said. "We're here every day."

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Ledger (FL)
March 5, 2015

Haines City Officials Approve Intern Request

Author: Madison Fantozzi

The assistant to the city manager in Haines City hasn't even moved into his office yet, and City Manager Jonathan Evans is already looking for some extra help — an intern. This is part of a grass-roots effort, he said, to knock on a lot of doors and increase civic engagement. City commissioners Thursday unanimously approved the intern request.

The intern will be classified as a full-time, hourly employee eligible for benefits. Pay will be between \$14.93 and \$22.39 per hour with an estimated \$25,000 budget impact this fiscal year and \$49,338 in future years. Evans said there are adequate savings in the budget with current employee vacancies to pay for the position.

Commissioner Ronnie Cotton asked whether this would prevent a department head from filling a position in the future, but Evans said the intern, who would fill the position for two to three years, would be cut before a needed position goes unfilled. The intern will rotate and spend four to five months in each department to learn different jobs and provide some extra help in each area. "It allows us to home-grow some talent and farm that person out to different departments," Evans said.

Evans already has some prospects — those who applied for the assistant position who didn't necessarily have the work experience to fill the position but met education requirements.

Evans hired **David Johnson** as assistant to the city manager in February. He'll start March 30 with a \$64,000 salary per year.

City commissioners also unanimously approved a request for a building maintenance technician for the Leisure Services Department. The employee will perform preventive and routine maintenance. The position will have an estimated \$26,000 budget impact this fiscal year and \$51,919 in future years.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Ledger (FL)
February 8, 2015

Haines City Hires Junior Executive

Author: Madison Fantozzi

After almost two years without an assistant, City Manager Jonathan Evans has hired **David Johnson**, executive fellow of Bountiful City in Utah.

Johnson, 33, is to start his Haines City job in mid-March with a \$64,000 yearly salary. "You can tell the excitement in his voice, and that's something you can't teach," Evans said. "We're excited to get him on board and get some of the projects we've had on the back burner brought to the forefront." The assistant to the city manager is a junior executive position meant to prepare an individual for a municipal manager position, Evans said. "We're excited to prepare (him) for what Haines City needs and ultimately for the professional growth opportunity (he) needs to ascend to assistant city manager, city manager, etc.," Evans said.

Some of **Johnson's** first tasks as assistant to the city manager: establish relationships with local businesses; work with department directors to produce a report card of their goals and achievements; and participate with city officials in knocking on residents' doors to introduce themselves, Evans said.

Johnson said working on the front lines with the community is what he is used to doing, even if that means putting his personal cellphone number on websites or fliers for the public to call 24/7. "A lot of my experience has to do with going door to door, speaking to members of the community and bringing their concerns to the organization so we can build collaborative relationships," **Johnson** said

He has worked as an executive fellow for Bountiful City since December 2013 — a job he said has entailed conducting research and analysis for the city manager as an assistant would. He also has worked as a district executive director for the American Cancer Society and a communications manager for Utah Food Bank in Salt Lake City. He has a master's degree in public administration from the University of Utah and a bachelor's degree in communications from Brigham Young University.

In addition to acclimating to hotter, more humid weather, **Johnson** said, building relationships within the organization will be his biggest learning curve. "With any new job, you need to learn the culture and the priorities," **Johnson** said. "But outside of that, my experience aligns with what the position is meant to achieve, so I'm going to hit the ground running."

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

<https://www.theledger.com/story/news/local/2015/02/04/haines-city-manager-hires-an-assistant/27026406007/>
February 4, 2015

Haines City Manager Hires An Assistant

Author. Madison Fantizze

After almost two years without an assistant and a weekend to sleep on his decision, City Manager Jonathan Evans has hired **David Johnson**, executive fellow of Bountiful City in Utah. **Johnson**, 33, is to start mid-March with a \$64,000 yearly salary.

"You can tell the excitement in his voice and that's something you can't teach," Evans said. "We're excited to get him on board and get some of the projects we've had on the back burner brought to the forefront." The assistant to the city manager is a junior executive position meant to prepare an individual for a municipal manager position, Evans said. "We're excited to prepare (him) for what Haines City needs and ultimately for the professional growth opportunity (he) needs to ascend to assistant city manager, city manager, etc.," Evans said.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Deseret News (UT)
September 20, 2012

Utah Food Bank gathers a mile of food to help beat hunger

Author: Julian Reyes

Commuters were treated to a burst of color on State Street Thursday as the Utah Food Bank lined up a mile's worth of canned and boxed food in an effort to beat hunger. The Utah Food Bank began the food line at the Salt Lake City-County Building and gradually added food items throughout the day in an effort to reach the state Capitol by the end of the day. The goal was met by 3 p.m. "For those of us feeding hungry folks, the summer is the busiest time for us," said Ginette Bott, chief marketing officer for the Utah Food Bank.

The purpose of the event was to prepare for the upcoming holiday season, as summer food supplies have been depleted. Summer was one of the busiest times of the year, because children who usually receive free breakfasts and lunches at school were out for summer vacation. "Come September and going into the holidays we need to replenish the stock and fill the shelves again to get ready for the holidays," Bott said. "Those are special times for families," she said. "We want to try to have turkeys or hams for those holidays, so now it's an all-out effort by all of us to be ready for what we call our holiday season, which is October to January."

September is Hunger Action Month, which the food bank is using to make Utahns aware of the needs in the community. "About 472,000 Utahns do not know where their next meal is coming from, and that is 17 percent of Utah," said **David Johnson**, spokesman for the Utah Food Bank.

From the City-County Building to the Capitol, the food bank used an estimated 27,000 cans of food to make the mile. People curious about the project pulled up to the lines and donated food and money for the cause.

The line of food caught Pam Jolley's eye as she drove on State Street Thursday. "It's a great way to make people remember it's important to give to the food bank," she said.

The Utah Food Bank uses 134 pantries and agencies across the state, which then distribute the food to those in need. Last year the Utah Food Bank provided 26 million pounds of food to Utah families. This year it hopes to provide 28 million pounds.

The food bank particularly needs items packed with protein, things like peanut butter, tuna, canned stew and canned beans. "Just the basic things the families are interested in that you would buy for your family, that's what we need for these families as well," Bott said.

The Utah Food Bank is asking the public to take a bag with food to any Walmart store. The stores will have trucks ready to pick up the donations. For those areas that don't have a Walmart, the food bank has asked residents to take donations to a local food bank or soup kitchen.

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DAVID SHANE JOHNSON
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All the food collected during the Beat Hunger by a Mile event will go to the Utah Food Bank and will be distributed statewide.

Utah Lt. Gov. Greg Bell added the last cans of food up the stairs of the Capitol Thursday afternoon. "When you realize that you want to eat everyday — at least three times — this food, although it looks like a lot, it is not much," he said. "You tend to respond to fits of charity, but people want to eat 365 days a year."

Research Compiled by: Christopher Nestman
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