

COLIN BAENZIGER  ASSOCIATES

EXECUTIVE RECRUITING

Section 6

Darren N. Coldwell

*Juno Beach Town Manager
Candidate Report*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
COVER LETTER AND RESUME	1
CANDIDATE INTRODUCTION	9
BACKGROUND CHECKS	17
CB&A REFERENCE NOTES	21
INTERNET SEARCH	33

Cover Letter and Resume

11/07/2024

Darren Coldwell
PO Box 3857
Page, AZ 86040
Darrencoldwell56@gmail.com
406-291-9909

Town of Juno Beach, Florida
Mayor Wheeler & Town Council
340 Ocean Drive
Juno Beach, FL 33408

Dear Mayor Wheeler & City Council,

I am writing to express my interest in the position of City Manager for the Town of Juno Beach, Florida. As the current City Manager of Page, Arizona, I am responsible for overseeing all day-to-day city operations which include managing thirteen different departments: IT, Finance, Parks & Trails, Planning & Zoning, Recreation, Community Marketing, Economic Development, Public Works, Police, Fire and Rescue, Lake Powell National Golf Course, Horseshoe Bend, and Special Events. Additionally, I oversee smaller departments like the Library, Community Center, and Digital Information. In total, these departments employ over 200 dedicated staff members and operate with an annual budget of nearly \$90 million. Page is a full-service community of 7,500 residents, but swells to 40,000 during the day. Page has 2500 hotel rooms, over 400 short-term rental accommodations and 50 restaurants. The operation of these facilities brings workers from all around the area for employment.

Under the direction of the City Council, I implement approved policies, procedures, resolutions, ordinances, and directives. My duties include appointing, conducting annual reviews, discussing disciplinary actions, and, when necessary, removing City employees. I develop and implement Page's Capital Improvement Program and oversee large capital projects from inception to completion. I also coordinate and approve agendas for City Council meetings and have established strong working relationships with local and state legislators. My knowledge of state politics and the legislative process has been instrumental in my success. To enhance employee working conditions, I have initiated and participated in several developmental committees.

Creating and managing the annual budget is a significant aspect of my role. During the fiscal years 2020 and 2021, I creatively reduced the budget amid the COVID-19 pandemic by introducing incentives, a hiring freeze, and consolidating positions. Despite the financial challenges, I increased the Reserves and General Fund from \$23 million in July 2019 to \$51 million by February 2024, achieving a fully funded reserve fund of over \$12 million. As of July, last year, the City of Page is debt-free, including the emergency services retirement fund (PSPRS) and the Arizona State Retirement Fund. My extensive experience in local government budgeting includes working with Mill Levy Valuations and State Sales Tax Distributions, as well as negotiating health insurance contracts, union agreements, and rental agreements.

Section 6

My human resources experience includes mentoring staff, setting goals, promoting professional development, encouraging initiative, and ensuring effective working relationships. I am well-versed in the legal requirements for disciplining or removing staff and have experience in both Right to Work and At Will states. My management philosophy is based on inclusion and tolerance, leading by example, and fostering a supportive environment. This approach has resulted in a stable management team, with only one Director leaving for a different career opportunity during my tenure. I am personable, understanding, and a good listener, which has helped me establish positive relationships with regional and local news media outlets.

During my time with the City of Page, I have made significant changes to personnel duties and responsibilities. I brought website design in-house, created a new Special Events department, and successfully promoted our City, resulting in over five million annual visitors, Which is more than the Grand Canyon. Our marketing strategy now targets extended stays and includes broader markets like Canada, Washington, Idaho, Montana, Colorado, Texas, Utah, and neighboring states. These efforts have consistently increased sales tax revenue for the past 53 months and accounted for 5.2 million visitors in 2023.

I am confident that my leadership skills, private industry background, government experience that is both City and County, strong financial abilities, communication skills, human resources knowledge, and management style make me an excellent fit for Juno Beach. I would be honored to contribute to and help lead the staff of Juno Beach.

Thank you for considering my application. My family and I are excited about the possibility of relocating to the area, one of the best cities to live in, in Florida. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly at (406) 291-9909.

Sincerely,

Darren Coldwell

Darren Coldwell

Darrencoldwell56@gmail.com PO Box 3857 Page, AZ 86040 (406) 291-9909

City Manager

Education

University of Montana, Missoula, MT
Bachelor of Arts, Interpersonal Communications-Organizational Emphasis

A dedicated and goal-focused City/County Manager with a deep-rooted compassion for community engagement and extensive administrative management expertise. I am Darren Coldwell, a tested City/County Manager with a proven track record in navigating complex union contract negotiations, facilitating critical health insurance agreements, and structuring solid lease agreements. My ability to collaborate and communicate internally and externally provides me with the strengths in personnel management, decision-making, and public relations is complemented by a comprehensive understanding of budgeting, government administration, human resources, and municipal law. Trusted as an advisor and liaison, I am committed to making significant contributions that propel personnel towards achieving their long-term objectives. Open-minded and proactive, I prioritize listening and collaboration to foster success.

Work History

City Manager City of Page, Arizona Page, Arizona 86040	11/2019 to Present
County Administrator Lincoln County, Montana Libby, Montana 59923	02/2017 to 11/2019
Mayor City of Troy, Montana Troy, Montana 59935	11/2013 to 11/2017
Business Owner Booze n Bait Troy, Montana 59935	07/1992 to 06/2017

Skills:

Administrative Management Expertise:

- Oversee daily operations of all departments, providing strategic direction to Directors, Managers, and City Council/County Commission. This includes conducting personnel reviews, setting performance goals, fostering motivation, and implementing disciplinary measures when necessary. Extensive experience in oversight of Human Resources and decision making of Human Resources challenges.
- Created forward-thinking incentives to recruit personnel as well as maintain staffing levels. Incentives include potential signing bonuses, help with moving expenses, help with first and last rent and hook-up fees of new rentals, a mix of available work schedules including a four-day work week for all administrative staff. These changes of decreased turn-over of staff drastically, including Fire Department currently at full employment and the PD is only two recruits short of their staffing goals.
- Review and evaluate departmental structures to ensure optimal cross-functional training, streamline workflows, and enhance operational agility. Implement measures to strengthen the organizational framework and promote fiscal stability.
- Act as the primary coordinator of municipal activities, providing insights to the Mayor and City Council/County Commission on administration, financial management, and data automation. Develop and maintain comprehensive documentation essential for smooth administrative processes.
- A forward-thinking City/County Manager that motivates staff to participate in the vision that the City Council/County Commission has conveyed to residents. Ensures that a positive and cohesive environment is provided for all staff and encourages them to challenge the status quo.
- Engage with various stakeholders, prepare written communications for the Mayor and City Council/County Commission, and interact with the media to articulate the City/County's positions on key issues. Plan agendas, provide essential background information, and collaborate with the City Attorney on legal matters.
- Guide union contract negotiations, implement city policies, and foster strong relationships with state personnel. Oversee acquisition contracts for power distribution and solicit contracts for the City Council/County Commission, continuously striving to uphold governance and operational excellence.
- Pride myself in leading staff in going beyond expected delivery of exemplary service to the residents and constituents in the community.

Budget and Finance Management:

- Develop and oversee the City/County budget with a focus on transparency, accountability, and strategic financial planning. Manage and implement the annual budget, ensuring sound financial governance and operational effectiveness.

- Have exceeded in increasing the cash flow for the General Fund and was able to meet the goal for the Rainy-Day Fund by still meeting the expectations of the Strategic Plan, Growth Plan and the Transportation and Maintenance Plan.
- Provide intuitive financial reports to empower the City Council/County Commission with necessary insights for fiscal oversight. Develop and implement policies and procedures in alignment with City Council/County Commission directives, promoting financial stability through constant oversight of fiscal performance.
- Offer leadership and expertise on decision-making issues impacting the City/County's financial landscape, guiding the City Council/County Commission in making informed choices. Develop preliminary budget documents projecting cash flows, reserves, revenues, and expenditure requirements across all departments.
- Emphasize the development and maintenance of cost measurement procedures, BARS accounting allocations, and purchasing practices. Monitor budget execution, implement internal audit controls, and evaluate budget implementation for efficiency opportunities.

Community Development and Relations:

- Foster collaboration with City/County volunteers, representing the City Council/County Commission at meetings, hearings, and public events. Engage with the community to ensure their voice is heard and valued.
- Cultivate and nurture robust community relations while leading development initiatives that enrich the City/County. Participate in meetings and public engagements to address residents' needs effectively.
- Extensive experience working with the marketing of communities and expanding their outreach to improve market share. Innovative City/County Manager with success in public space placemaking and transforming the ideas of the City Council/County Commission into powerful platforms for success.
- Guide and mentor Board members, empowering them to contribute to community governance and progress. Foster synergy and cooperation with volunteer organizations, ensuring successful board performance.
- Advocate for sustainable land-use practices, conservation efforts, and natural resource preservation. Participate in volunteer board meetings to collaborate with community members for the City/County's betterment.
- Attract potential businesses to the community, fostering economic growth and creating opportunities for prosperity. Cultivate relationships with decision-makers and stakeholders for strategic partnerships driving economic development.
- Support the local business community by researching, initiating contact, and engaging with industry leaders and entrepreneurs. Enhance the economic landscape, promote business growth, and create an inclusive environment nurturing entrepreneurship and independence.

- **Volunteer Board Affiliations**

- Kootenai Valley Rotary, Former President
- Troy Fourth of July Committee, Board Chair
- Troy Chamber of Commerce, Executive Director
 - United For Youth, Board Member
- Kootenai River Development, Former Board Member
- Lincoln County Port Authority, Former Board Member
 - Troy School Board, Former Board Member
- Troy Volunteer Fire Department, Former Fire Marshall

•

- **Professional Associations**

- American Society of Public Administration
- Government Finance Officers Association
- International City/County Managers Association
- Board of Directors Arizona City/County Managers Association

•

Candidate Introduction

DARREN COLDWELL

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts, Interpersonal Communications, Organizational Emphasis. I have continued to focus on expanding my education by participating and attending classes from ICMA, GFOA and the many different professional management academies that are offered. I have given presentations on *How to Communicate as a Manager* at the Arizona League of Cities and the Arizona County/City Management Association. I have also received the FEMA 101 certification.

EXPERIENCE

City Manager, Page, Arizona	11/2019 – Present
County Manager, Lincoln County, Montana	05/2017 – 11/2019
Mayor, City of Troy, Montana	01/2013 – 12/2017
Owner, Booze N Bait, Troy, Montana	07/1992 – 05/2017

BACKGROUND

The full-service City of Page is located at the base of Glenn Canyon Dam and the Lake Powell Reservoir, the second largest reservoir in the United States. Page is a community located on the border between the state of Utah and the Navajo Nation. Page, which has a population of 7,500, but a service corridor of 40,000, has a greater amount of activity than most communities of its size. In the last five years, Page has gone through a major industry change with the closure of the Navajo Generating System, a coal-fired power plant. A drastic change in marketing has made the City of Page a multi-adventure outdoor tourist destination. With Horseshoe Bend inside the city limits, the Antelope Canyons, Lake Powell, and biking and hiking, Page has developed a tourist-based industry. The aggressive marketing of these outdoor features resulted in 5.2 million visitors in 2023. This has meant an increase in city services with 200 employees, I oversee 11 directors and managers. With additional tourism, the General Fund budget now stands at \$28.5 million, with a total budget of nearly \$90 million. The Capital Fund has reached \$16.5 million, while the CIP has reached \$10.5 million.

The City of Page is facing three major challenges:

- The increase of visitors has created several problems that Page had not anticipated. The first problem is affordable housing for those professionals who are needed in the community. The demand for housing, both rental and for sale properties, has created a very difficult environment for local businesses in terms of retaining and recruiting employees. Page is also surrounded by BLM and Navajo Nation property; this limits its opportunity for further growth.

DARREN COLDWELL

- The second issue is the need for improved infrastructure. The increased demand on the roads, public utilities, city parks, and airport has created a situation that the city is not only unable to keep up with, but it has also been a challenge to find revenue to fund these projects.
- Water is always a concern in Arizona. The third most important hurdle that Page faces is a lack of water supply. Water is currently supplied by a pump that originates from Glenn Canyon Dam. This water source was installed during the construction of the dam 60 years ago. Currently, the estimated cost of installing new pumps and updating the treatment plant is \$40 million. The services are under financial strain now and in the future due to this daunting cost.

GENERAL, MANAGEMENT STYLE AND EXPERIENCE

Considering the reasons why my wife and I want to move to Juno Beach, the answers were simple for us. Originally from Western Montana, it is our desire to be in an area that offers everything that comes with living in a smaller metropolitan community that has a small-town atmosphere. We both desire to be in a beachside community like Juno Beach that is a hidden gem with a friendly relaxed atmosphere. Also, Juno Beach offers a low crime rate and safe neighborhoods that are important to both of us. Juno Beach is an excellent place to live, raise a family, and offers an opportunity to advance professionally. Juno Beach offers a financially stable opportunity, and it understands that decreased debt offers more opportunity to improve the town. The final reason, and the most important, is I am looking for a community that wants an experienced manager that wants to commit to a long-term engagement.

Management of people is not something that can be learned in the classroom or from one of the many books available on the topic. My professional management style has evolved over time. I believe that a manager leads by example, and it is important to mentor those who wish to advance in their career. My management style emphasizes mentorship, empowerment, and respect. My management philosophy is one of an open-door policy for the residents, team members, and the Town Council. I believe providing opportunities for advancement and creating an environment where staff can succeed in their own way is crucial to me. My management style is centered around listening to staff and emphasizing customer service. I also think it is important to set achievable goals for both me and my staff members and ensure that ongoing training and educational support for professional growth is offered to all. My hands-on approach not only nurtures individual development but also contributes to a positive and productive workplace culture. I am an expert in conflict resolution and a consensus builder that knows how to help all get to a yes answer.

I believe that my staff members would describe me as a manager who is both supportive and effective. I am a proven leader and decisive decision maker. They are likely to express their appreciation for my patience and hard work, acknowledging that I prioritize their needs while

DARREN COLDWELL

meeting the demands of the boards and council. My ability to advocate for staff and ensure that necessary resources are available to them demonstrates my commitment to their success. I am not a micro-manager of staff but rather a manager that delegates responsibility and promotes long range planning and stresses departmental annual plans. I am calm under pressure while having the utmost integrity, which are qualities that build trust and respect among my staff. Overall, staff would say that my down-to-earth management style and energetic approach encourages a positive and productive work environment.

As a City Manager, I believe elected officials would describe me as a dedicated and trustworthy leader who consistently prioritizes fiscal integrity. I hold my staff accountable for their actions. I have successfully built relationships with both the public and our elected officials, making significant progress while working in the state capital and engaging with our DC representatives. Elected officials will say that I understand that following their directives is crucial. I take pride in executing their visions while managing the difficulties of local government. In an environment that requires adaptive skills, I have proven my ability to wear many hats. Elected officials would speak highly of my problem-solving skills and unwavering work ethic, noting that I consistently strive to achieve the goals of elected officials while placing my commitment to ethical standards as a personal priority. Ultimately, I believe they would speak of my integrity and my commitment to represent the boards and councils with the highest ethical standards, ensuring that their interests and their need to be continuously updated, and the needs of our community are always at the forefront of my efforts.

As a City Manager, my greatest strength is my ability to bring together many different viewpoints and personalities to reach a consensus. This ability includes the important personal strengths of listening, respecting, prioritizing, and bringing stakeholders to a consensus. Juno Beach and its residents would benefit from my ability to work on multi-layered projects. The ability to build consensus is important in a small town where every resident isn't afraid to express their opinion to the Council. Working in smaller counties and communities has required me to be a successful multitasker, which enables me to professionally accomplish the never-ending workload that a manager has. Being able to wear many hats and my background in small business and private industry helps when you consider the development issues facing Juno Beach.

If I were to consider a weakness of mine, it would be my lack of patience at times. I am constantly striving for quick results, which can cause unnecessary stress. Now that I am aware of this shortcoming, it is the first step towards being patient and taking a deep breath and appreciating the value of taking events slow and steady.

I believe that there is a place for annual reviews, but as a manager I consider meeting once a year with an employee not only unfair to the staff member, but it is also unfair to the whole team. I personally meet every Monday at 7:30 AM with all my Directors as a group to discuss the prior week and the upcoming week. The team has fostered a sense of camaraderie because of this. I also meet weekly with the Department Managers and Directors individually for a half hour or

DARREN COLDWELL

sometimes less to make sure that they receive what they need and to see if there are any issues that couldn't be discussed at the team meeting. By using this approach, I can ensure that I am on top of any personnel issues and have the chance to mentor and review the staff at least once a week, not annually. Twice a year, we all gather in one room to set department and city goals and discuss the progress of those goals. This has resulted in great productivity and provided a chance for team members to motivate each other in front of the entire group.

My professional career's greatest accomplishment is the new roundabout being constructed on HWY 89 and North Lake Powell Blvd. in Page. For many years now, this intersection has been problematic and has resulted in deaths. Although we worked diligently with the Department of Transportation, we were unsuccessful. Having built relationships with state and federal elected officials, I made the decision to attempt to apply for a state appropriation. It took three years of constant trips to the capital and phone calls to our senators and representatives to finally achieve success. Our congressman introduced it to the Transportation Committee, and with some wrangling and trading, the bill passed the Transportation Committee, succeeded in Finance, and was signed by Governor Ducey. Page was the first in the state to receive a state appropriation for an ADOT project, and I am currently watching the \$8 million project being built.

My biggest disappointment is a project that I had committed to for years. In 2020, the City Council directed me to develop a plan for a complete new Downtown Revitalization. Past councils have committed to the project by contributing to a Capital Improvement Program Fund, selecting an architectural and engineering firm, and continuing to place the project on their City Council priorities. In 2024 we succeeded in a Federal Economic Development grant for \$5 million to support the project and we learned that the regional League of Counties and Cities were placing it in their top three for funding requests in the amount of \$8.6. These two combined would fund the entire project. A contentious group of citizens came out against the project and sued the city. They were not successful in two lower courts, and they threatened to recall Councilors who supported the project. They have taken the case to the Arizona Supreme Court. I spent hours trying to inform the public and educate the City Council about the advantages of the Downtown Streetscape plan. Even with all of this, the plan failed 3 to 3. What I have learned is that no matter what you do, the dais changes every couple of years which can change the focus of the elected body. I also have learned that stepping back and reevaluating isn't failing.

Dismissing personnel is one of the most challenging expectations a manager faces. Of course, some are easier than others, but changing a person's life, normally never for the better, always bothers me. The Page Chief of Police was one of the hardest dismissals I had to do. For almost a year, I faced difficulties with the Chief. I placed him on a Performance Improvement Program, I did a 360 review, and hired a professional management coach to try and change his behavior. None of these actions brought him to a professional level that I felt comfortable with. The Chief of Police is an extremely political position and a very public one. In our final meeting I let him know that he was leading, but he no longer had any followers. As a result, I had to let him go. I did offer that if he had a resignation letter on my desk by the end of the day, I would accept it. It

DARREN COLDWELL

is important to treat employees with respect, and as a manager, I take all steps to ensure that a staff member can succeed.

The challenges that I believe Juno Beach is facing:

- Juno Beach is a small town and with small towns come different challenges. Growing up in a small town I know how important it is for the Town Manager to spend the necessary time getting to know the people who call Juno Beach home. This can be one of the biggest challenges for many managers. The importance of making time for the residents and having that open-door policy that I discussed is especially important.
- The cost of aging infrastructure is a challenge that needs to be addressed. The next Town Manager is going to face a potential budget challenge with the town-wide Sales Tax expiring. I am fiscally conservative, which will be a positive during this time.
- With Juno Beach being a small community, the next manager is going to have to realize that the residents and the City Council are protective of the development of their town. A focus needs to be on growth that is a plus and beneficial for the entire community, not just a few or the developer. This is why my experience in consensus building can be beneficial to Juno Beach as a whole.

In the first six months as City Manager, my focus will be working with the leaders of the community to understand the culture of the town and focus on what they consider to be the priorities. I will spend time with the staff understanding what they feel the team sees as problems and what they sense the town is doing well. The next steps are to become familiar with the City Council and to take the time to understand each of their personalities and what they consider their priorities are for the Town Manager. Finally, spending the time to focus on the Council's written priorities and begin the necessary long-term Strategic Planning that needs to be accomplished.

The press has always been a great partner for me, I actually see the press as an arm of City Hall. In my view, transparency is superior to avoiding or ignoring the press. My approach to the press is to be proactive in working with reporters. If a story is going to be made public, I'd rather be the one to explain it and keep the press updated. This way I can set the tone of the article, rather than the reporter assuming information. Because of these relationships I am positive that all the reporters I have worked with will agree that there is nothing in my background that would be a surprise or embarrassment to Juno Beach.

Every manager knows that social media can be used as a weapon against staff, elected officials, and projects that are being discussed by the town. In the last couple of years, I have taken a very proactive approach to social media. A social media coordinator has been hired by me. Because of this change, we now have an opportunity to address rumors on almost every site. We now have a presence on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and X. We also have a tab on the city website for

DARREN COLDWELL

questions. We do not respond to comments on any website, but we do release factual information when it is necessary. We have also just recently created a virtual magazine called Page Happenings. This monthly magazine gives different departments, as well as me, an opportunity to discuss what is happening in their departments. In just four months of being created, we already have over eight hundred subscribers.

Anyone who has been in local government for very long will tell you that we all have our naysayers. I am no different, but I believe each of them respects my commitment to follow the directives from the City Council and they would never take the time to call to speak badly of me.

In my free time I enjoy flower gardening and lawn work, a special reason I am excited about the opportunity of Juno Beach. I especially enjoy working in the dirt with my roses and flowerpots. I am proud to say that I am a very good cook and baker. I spend time on the weekends baking different breads for the upcoming week. My wife and I also enjoy traveling and attending concerts in different cities. Our kids are spread between Montana and Arizona, so we plan most of our vacations in these two beautiful states.

SIX ADJECTIVES OR PHRASES THAT I WOULD USE TO DESCRIBE MYSELF

- Great Communicator
- Experienced and Talented Leader
- Responsive to Problems and Staff
- Outstanding Customer Service
- Highest Ethical and Integrity Commitment
- Exceptional Problem Solver

REASON FOR WANTING TO LEAVE CURRENT POSITION

I am looking to leave my position as City Manager of Page because I believe that the opportunity in Juno Beach offers a new challenge for career growth. Also, Juno Beach is a place that my wife and I would be honored to call home. We are looking for a place that we can make a long-time commitment to and a place that wants a stable manager for the future of the town. In addition, the upcoming changes in city leadership in Page, following the decision of the long-time Mayor and Councilors to not seek re-election, makes this the right time for me to look for a new opportunity in a region we love.

CURRENT SALARY

My current salary for the City of Page is \$178,200, not including benefits.

Section 6

CB&A Background Checks

**Background Check Summary for
DARREN NEWELL COLDWELL**

Criminal Records Checks:

Nationwide Criminal Records Search	No Records Found
County	
Kane County, UT	No Records Found
Coconino County, AZ	No Records Found
Lincoln County, MT	No Records Found
State	
Utah	No Records Found
Arizona	No Records Found
Montana	No Records Found

Civil Records Checks:

County	
Kane County, UT	No Records Found
Coconino County, AZ	No Records Found
Lincoln County, MT	No Records Found
Federal	
Utah	No Records Found
Arizona	No Records Found
Montana	No Records Found

Motor Vehicle

Utah	No Records Found
------	------------------

Credit

Excellent

Personal Bankruptcy

No Records Found

Sex Offender Registry

Not Listed

Education

Confirmed

Employment

Confirmed

Social Media

Nothing of Concern Found

**Background Check Summary for
DARREN NEWELL COLDWELL**

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
DARREN NEWELL COLDWELL
Personal Disclosure**

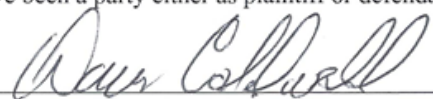
Personal Disclosure Questionnaire

Name of Applicant: DARREN COLDWELL

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, driving under the influence, operating a vehicle impaired, or a similar offense?
Yes No
7. Have you ever sued a current or former employer?
Yes No
8. Please list all your social media accounts (Facebook / Instagram / LinkedIn / Twitter, etc.) and your personal web page if you have one. Facebook, Instagram
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
10. Please provide a list of any lawsuits in which you are or have been a party either as plaintiff or defendant.

Attested to: 
Signature of Applicant

CB&A Reference Notes

**Reference Notes
Darren Coldwell**

Mark Comier - City Council Member, City of Page, AZ 480-452-9895

Mr. Comier has known Mr. Coldwell since 2019 when he hired Mr. Coldwell to work as the City Manager. Mr. Comier worked as a City Council Member.

Mr. Coldwell has exceptional job performance. He never did anything questionable and proved fiscally responsible. He kept the City Council informed on expenditure and budgeting. His coworkers enjoy working with him and he makes good decisions when hiring personnel. Everyone Mr. Coldwell hired still works there. He heavily participates in the process of hiring Managers and Directors with the panel interviews and gives good feedback on candidates. He also makes good decisions in general, always keeping the organization's best interest in mind.

Mr. Coldwell is a problem-solver who can lead a team in solving a problem. For example, the City has a yearly hot air balloon event. One year, outside vendors fought over who got control of what. Mr. Coldwell had to deal with this and bring the issue to the Council's attention. He made changes to the event to limit vendor scope while also creating a fairer process for vendors, thus eliminating vendor infighting.

Mr. Coldwell handles the different elected officials with their different agendas well. He makes sure the outcome of a project matches the City Council's priorities. He understands the City must match certain priorities in its charter, goals, and objectives. He steered the results to meet these priorities.

Mr. Coldwell proves himself innovative, a change agent, and someone who maintains an organization at a high-performance level. He gave ideas for changes and improvements for the organization. Overall, he looked for people's strengths and did not shy away from moving employees to where he thought they would perform best.

Mr. Comier would hire Mr. Coldwell if he could and thinks Mr. Coldwell is a good manager.

Words or phrases used to describe Darren Coldwell:

- Knowledgeable,
- Thoughtful,
- Competent,
- Valuable,
- Well-tempered, and
- Fiscally responsible.

Strengths: A good manager with strong communication, organization, and financial skills.

Weaknesses: None identified.

**Reference Notes
Darren Coldwell**

Bill Diak - Mayor, City of Page, AZ 602-499-8733

Mr. Diak has known Mr. Coldwell since 2020 when they started working together for the City of Page. Mr. Diak works as the Mayor and Mr. Coldwell works as the City Manager.

Mr. Coldwell works well with the Council and Town Hall gave him an above-average performance review. He deals with several different personalities with different agendas daily. He adapts his communication style based on who he is talking to. He can read the Council's desires and how they want to receive information. He bases his delivery approach on that.

Mr. Coldwell is innovative and a change agent. Since he started working for the City of Page, staff morale has tremendously improved. Before he arrived, Mr. Diak described the morale as low. Mr. Coldwell improved this issue by holding weekly meetings with his Directors and taking care to acknowledge staff accomplishments. Not only does he praise staff when he runs into them, but he also communicates their accomplishments to the Council. With more recognition for a job well done, staff report a more positive working environment.

Mr. Coldwell makes good decisions when hiring personnel and makes good decisions in general. He keeps Mr. Diak informed of what happens in his area of responsibility by talking in person on an almost daily basis. He also meets individually with each of the Council Members to keep everyone up to date.

Mr. Coldwell is a leader in the sense that he takes the organization's vision and rallies the employees around it. He manages the Strategic Priorities and delegates appropriately to ensure the organization meets those priorities on time. He is very hands-on with his Directors but does not micro-manage the staff's day-to-day responsibilities.

Mr. Coldwell solves problems. For example, he recognized that he needed to adopt a more hands-on approach with the staff to improve morale. He addressed this personnel problem by changing the way they thought about upper management throughout the corporation. In the sense that the staff has more trust in management to help them achieve their goals and give them recognition for their accomplishments.

Mr. Coldwell often goes out in the community and attends most major functions. He attends meetings representing the organization with the League of Towns, community meetings, and the city manager association. He makes staying in touch with the rest of the county a priority.

Mr. Coldwell is an outstanding manager. He has a strong work ethic and spends the time he should in the office. He is always one of the first people to arrive in the morning and one of the last people to leave in the evening. He has earned a great reputation in the City. Mr. Diak would absolutely hire Mr. Coldwell if he could.

**Reference Notes
Darren Coldwell**

Words or phrases used to describe Darren Coldwell:

- Efficient,
- Professional,
- Outgoing,
- Technical,
- Detail-oriented, and
- Diplomatic.

Strengths: A great manager who comes from an accounting background and excels at managing finances.

Weaknesses: He could improve his communication skills when interacting with colleagues on a personal basis.

Rachell French - Director of Human Resources, City of Page, AZ 928-660-9055

Ms. French has known Mr. Coldwell since 2019. Ms. French works as the Director of Human Resources for the City of Page. Mr. Coldwell works as the City Manager.

Mr. Coldwell does an amazing job as a City Manager. In particular, he excels at getting a city team and outside groups to work together. He has done a good job with the City Council and the School District.

Mr. Coldwell genuinely cares about the people he works with and fosters a positive work environment. He makes good decisions when hiring personnel and good decisions in general. Ms. French has not worked with another City Manager as good at their job as Mr. Coldwell. She does not want him to leave the City of Page. He would be missed.

Mr. Coldwell proves himself innovative, a change agent, and someone who maintains an organization at a high-performance level. He acts as a leader in the sense that he takes the organization's vision and rallies the employees around it. And he can also manage from behind the desk and make sure organization processes run smoothly. Mr. Coldwell does not micro-manage his employees. He keeps Ms. French informed on what happens in his area of responsibility. He has weekly meetings with all his direct reports and maintains an open-door policy.

Mr. Coldwell can solve problems. For example, the organization had a couple of instances where different departments did not work well together. He worked with his Directors to address the issue, so everyone could start working in a cohesive way. After addressing the issue, people started to work together more effectively.

Reference Notes Darren Coldwell

Mr. Coldwell handles different personalities very well. He works with several elected officials with different agendas daily. In meetings, he brings the facts and reminds officials why they chose to do things a certain way. Mr. Coldwell presents the reasoning behind his decisions and keeps his cool in high-stress environments.

Ms. French would hire Mr. Coldwell if she could and knows he is a great manager.

Words or phrases used to describe Darren Coldwell:

- Kind,
- Strategic,
- Personable,
- Problem solver,
- Customer service-oriented, and
- Financially responsible.

Strengths: A good manager with strong budgeting and finance skills. He also showcases great interpersonal skills and encourages his employees to have a work-life balance.

Weaknesses: Can work on having difficult conversations with employees before behaviors become a problem.

Josh Smith - City Attorney, City of Page, AZ 307-884-9000

Mr. Smith has known Mr. Coldwell since about 2019. Mr. Smith works as the City Attorney for the City of Page. Mr. Coldwell works as the City Manager.

Mr. Coldwell does a good job as the City Manager. The Council has expressed its approval of him many times. He gets along well with his coworkers with his easygoing and personable demeanor. He makes good decisions when hiring personnel and in general.

Mr. Coldwell keeps Mr. Smith informed of what happens in his area of responsibility. Mr. Coldwell usually loops Mr. Smith in when things need a legal review. They communicate mostly by phone and email. Although, they do have in-person meetings when necessary.

Mr. Coldwell proves himself innovative, a change agent, and someone who maintains an organization at a high-performance level. He cares and wants to do a good job with any task he sets out to do. He is a forward thinker. He is a leader in the sense that he takes an organization's vision and rallies the employees around it. The City Council sets the vision and then Mr. Coldwell directs the organization to achieve those goals.

Reference Notes Darren Coldwell

Mr. Coldwell can lead teams in solving problems. For example, he realized the organization needed to modernize its systems by initiating online payments, updating websites, and making those experiences more user-friendly. Mr. Coldwell asked the different departments to update their processes to make them easier for the public to use. The modernization proved successful. Mr. Coldwell took the vague description that the Council gave him for the “modernization initiative” and created a clear, actionable plan.

Mr. Coldwell goes out into the community often and regularly attends community meetings representing the organization. He integrates into the community and works with other organizations as well.

Mr. Smith would hire Mr. Coldwell if he could. Mr. Coldwell is a great manager.

Words or phrases used to describe Darren Coldwell:

- Personable,
- Hard worker,
- Caring,
- Genuine,
- Outgoing, and
- Dependable.

Strengths: A manager who has strong budgeting skills and can make quick decisions without falling into analysis paralysis.

Weaknesses: Making decisions too quickly.

Bryce Anderson - Superintendent of the School District, City of Page, AZ 623-826-9318

Mr. Anderson has known Mr. Coldwell since 2021. They have worked together in a professional capacity. Mr. Anderson works as the Superintendent of the School District for Page. Mr. Coldwell works as the City Manager for the City of Page. They work closely together on issues related to the community.

Mr. Coldwell did an outstanding job as the City Manager. Prior to his arrival, Page had significant challenges with its finances. Mr. Coldwell improved the finances and expanded services to local residents including capital improvements, a splash pad, a community pool, tourism, housing, and childcare.

Mr. Coldwell solves problems. For example, the City had an issue with a school district pool that was no longer operable. Citizens wanted to bring back the pool, but the expense made it not a fiscally responsible option. Mr. Coldwell then found someone who could bring a community pool to the city and started that project. He was instrumental in moving the project forward. This

**Reference Notes
Darren Coldwell**

ordeal proved controversial because some people did not understand the funding piece that would go into constructing and operating a pool. Mr. Coldwell looked at the situation multi-dimensionally and found a creative solution with a community pool, rather than repairing the school district pool.

When it comes to working with other people, Mr. Coldwell proves himself personable and able to handle a variety of different personalities. He works with different elected officials with different agendas daily. To keep the working environment productive, he allows everyone to have a voice and keeps the objectives to build a consensus around issues related to the community. Even when the Council does not agree with his ideas, he always operates respectfully and professionally.

Mr. Anderson would hire Mr. Coldwell in a heartbeat and knows he is an excellent manager.

Words or phrases used to describe Darren Coldwell:

- Positive,
- Communicative,
- Consensus-builder,
- Visionary,
- Fiscally responsible, and
- High character.

Strengths: A personable manager who is reliable and communicates clearly.

Weaknesses: None identified.

**Judy Franz - Head of Chamber of Commerce and Visitor Center, City of Page, AZ
928-606-5829**

Ms. Franz has known Mr. Coldwell since about 2020. Ms. Franz runs the Page Chamber of Commerce and the Visitor Center. Mr. Coldwell works as the City Manager for Page.

Mr. Coldwell exhibits excellent job performance. He thinks outside the box and always looks for the best way to do things. He is patient, customer service-oriented and community-oriented. Ms. Franz is highly impressed with Mr. Coldwell's professionalism.

Mr. Coldwell makes good decisions when hiring personnel. He picks out the best candidates and can identify how their strengths will benefit the organization. Since coming to the City of Page, he hired some of the best employees the organization has ever had. He brought the Department Heads up to a better standard overall. Mr. Coldwell also made good decisions in general.

**Reference Notes
Darren Coldwell**

Mr. Coldwell proves himself innovative, a change agent, and someone who maintains an organization at a high-performance level. He handles change well and helps the organization adapt. He keeps the course and works towards moving projects forward. Mr. Coldwell shows leadership by taking the organization's vision and rallying the employees around it. He is a team player.

Mr. Coldwell can lead a team in solving a problem. For example, the City worked hard on the downtown revitalization and recreation center. He and his team faced much opposition to the project from a small population of citizens. He had to adapt and work through the issues to get the projects done. He also put together Town Hall meetings and brought the community and project planners in the same place, so everyone could be on the same page. By addressing their concerns and answering their questions, Mr. Coldwell did a good job appeasing the small population of opposing citizens. He went out in the community often and regularly attended community meetings representing the organization. He is customer service oriented and maintains an open-door policy.

Mr. Coldwell is a good manager and Ms. Franz would hire him if she could.

Words or phrases used to describe Darren Coldwell:

- Focused,
- Team player,
- Organized,
- Leader,
- Communicative, and
- Follows through.

Strengths: A strong leader or is organized and focused. Excels at creating a good team that works well together.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Marcia Borris - County Attorney, Lincoln County, MT 406-293-2717

Ms. Borris has known Mr. Coldwell since 2017. They worked together for Lincoln County. Ms. Borris worked as the Lincoln County Attorney and Mr. Coldwell worked as the Lincoln County Administrator.

Mr. Coldwell had excellent job performance as a City Administrator and Ms. Borris was sad when he left the position. She has not seen another administrator who has had as much impact as Mr. Coldwell. He interacts professionally and respectfully with his coworkers.

**Reference Notes
Darren Coldwell**

Mr. Coldwell makes good decisions when hiring personnel. He supervised the Human Resources Department when he worked as the County Administrator for Lincoln County. He also makes good decisions in general.

Mr. Coldwell proved himself innovative, a change agent, and someone who maintains an organization at a high-performance level. The County needed to get into a better place financially. He realized the County was still paying insurance on vehicles it no longer owned because no one canceled the policies. He saved the County over \$50,000 by canceling insurance on these vehicles. He fixed this administrative oversight and made sure the County ran efficiently.

Mr. Coldwell kept Ms. Borris informed of what happened in his area of responsibility. They worked together mostly in budgeting. Mr. Coldwell proved communicative and met in person with Ms. Borris on a daily basis.

Mr. Coldwell shows leadership by taking an organization's vision and rallying employees around it. He often went out in the community and regularly attended community meetings representing the organization. He used to hold the title of Mayor in the Town of Troy. He got along with everyone and made himself known as a community leader.

Mr. Coldwell would make a fantastic addition to any organization, especially in an administrative capacity. Ms. Borris would hire him if she could.

Words or phrases used to describe Darren Coldwell:

- Thorough,
- Conscientious,
- Positive,
- Fiscally responsible,
- Pleasant, and
- Efficient.

Strengths: A great administrator who cares about the people he works with and builds a positive work environment.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Robin Crowther - Clerk and Recorder, Lincoln County, MT 719-580-1688

Ms. Robin has known Mr. Coldwell since about 2016. Ms. Crowther interviewed and hired Mr. Coldwell as the County Administrator. She worked as the Lincoln County Clerk and Recorder. They worked in different departments, but both presented to Commissioners. They discussed complex issues with each other before taking their ideas to the Commissioners.

Reference Notes Darren Coldwell

Mr. Coldwell's job performance was amazing in Lincoln County. He took over the budget and excelled at finding creative solutions to financial problems. He acts personable and professional when interacting with coworkers.

Mr. Coldwell also works well with handling different elected officials with different agendas. He balanced out the personalities by taking discussions back to the goal. People enjoyed working with Mr. Coldwell.

Mr. Coldwell proves himself innovative, a change agent, and someone who maintains an organization at a high-performance level. He had to come up with a detailed County Budget from scratch. He improved the organization by boosting employee morale and creating a positive working environment.

Mr. Coldwell acts as a leader in the sense that he takes the organization's vision and rallies the employees around it. He also does well with managing processes to ensure the organization runs smoothly.

Mr. Coldwell can solve problems. For example, the County needed to figure out its finances. The timber and mining revenue streams shut down. He had to cut the budget by \$100,000 from lack of revenue so the County would not go into debt. He rallied the Department Heads and built consensus around a financial plan that addressed the shortages but allowed the employees to keep their benefits.

Ms. French would hire Mr. Coldwell if she could.

Words or phrases used to describe Darren Coldwell:

- Friendly,
- Hard-working,
- Solutions oriented,
- Team player,
- Takes direction, and
- Professional.

Strengths: A personable manager who can handle complex situations like the budget with ease.

Weaknesses: None identified.

**Reference Notes
Darren Coldwell**

Tammy Anderson - Chair Member, City of Troy, MT 406-396-9627

Ms. Anderson has known Mr. Coldwell since about 1990. Mr. Coldwell owned a property Ms. Anderson rented for her business. They also worked together in the Troy Chamber of Commerce on civic duties.

Mr. Coldwell has excellent job performance and follows through with everything he says he will do. He made a huge difference in the community as a Volunteer Mayor. He made good decisions when hiring personnel and made good decisions in general. He often went out into the community and regularly attended community meetings representing the organization with a customer service attitude.

Mr. Coldwell can solve problems and handle complex tasks in a timely manner. For example, he found himself in charge of the City's Fourth of July celebration. He managed all the moving parts including preparing the grounds, measuring and assigning spots for vendors, organizing logistics, and communicating with the City Police to ensure safe traffic re-routing.

Ms. Anderson characterizes Mr. Coldwell as a patient individual and would hire him if she could. He is a great manager.

Words or phrases used to describe Darren Coldwell:

- Polite,
- Nice,
- Honest,
- Hard-working,
- Congenial, and
- Professional.

Strengths: An honest and hard-working person.

Weaknesses: None identified.

Prepared by: Hazel Jones
Colin Baenziger & Associates

Section 6

CB&A Internet Research

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Lake Powell Chronicle
October 9, 2024

Page Infrastructure

Part 2: Balancing priorities

By Bob Hembree

When word got out that the City of Page received a \$5 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), people started talking. The city had already saved enough funds to match the EDA grant. It was part of the deal. So \$11 million originally intended for the Streetscape project seems up for grabs to some. It's the old, hypothetical, "What would you do with a million dollars?" scenario, a chance for armchair city planners to decide how to best spend the money, regardless of what the experts recommend after months of studies, evaluations and consultations.

In Page, the mayor and council members are expected to make reasoned decisions on behalf of the city they represent. They are not experts, nor are they expected to be. Still, they must make major decisions on policies, projects and Page City finances. Councilor Kenna Hettinger summed it up best: "I think that the responsibility of City Council is to give direction to the experts. Have the experts come back with their recommendation so that we can understand the pros and cons of each path forward and then make the best decision." In other words, an effective councilor must grasp and evaluate information presented by experts in various fields and decide what is best for the community.

Non-experts often have good ideas, but ideas need evaluations, comprehensive studies and planning. The city needs experienced, well-informed expert input. Only then will councilors have enough reliable information to make informed decisions to authorize or not authorize large investments, like how to spend \$11 million and do it within the perimeters of federal grant agreements.

While the independent group, Page Forward, is actively exploring Page revitalization options, city administrators are waiting to see what the new city council looks like in November and which direction they decide to go. All council candidates agree on most issues like workforce housing and water infrastructure. They differ on uptown revitalization. Several of the candidates and mayor-elect Steven Kidman opposed making changes to Lake Powell Boulevard, which is at the heart of J2 Engineering & Environmental Design's "Streetscape" project. Even if anti-Streetscape candidates lose their bids for council seats, moving forward is thorny.

Last week, in part one of the Page Infrastructure series, the Chronicle reported on the unknown maintenance needs lurking below Lake Powell Boulevard. When the city's main street is repaved, all five lanes or however many lanes are decided, the piping, conduit and wiring beneath must be inspected and paths forward evaluated. The city must be prepared for the worst and in a position to act quickly. They don't want to affect the integrity of new pavement by cutting it up to fix a broken sewer line, electrical malfunction or a damaged water pipe. There's

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

also the expense of bringing the sidewalks and intersections up to ADA code (Americans with Disabilities Act). Even though there's \$11 million for the revitalization, it's unknown how much will be available for aesthetic improvements like nicer sidewalks, benches and rotundas. Of course, if Page's current economic growth continues, as it has with the current administration and council, finding more funds shouldn't be a problem.

One argument voiced at council meetings is balancing the workforce housing shortage with bringing in new business. How do you grow when workers can't find or afford homes? A balance is needed, otherwise businesses are perpetually short handed. The result is poor service quality and tainted reputations.

Under City Manager **Darren Coldwell** and the council before the two recent councilor resignations, over 120 new homes were added in Page. "By the end of 2026, we are expecting the national economy to turn around to bring the interest rates and inflation back to some kind of normalcy," said Page Planning Director Zach Montgomery. "And if that takes place, then we are projecting a minimum of 300 new single-family dwelling units in the City of Page to have been built by the end of 2026. We're looking at least half of those and probably 75% to be workforce housing. That's what we're working toward in our negotiations with the developers. "The type of housing or dwelling units that are in those projections include apartments, single family homes, duplexes and condominiums and townhomes."

When asked about investors snapping up new homes for short-term rentals, Montgomery said, "The primary benefit of the city owning the majority of the property within the city limits is when we sell that property to a developer, we have the ability to negotiate with them on the number, or percentage of housing, that's to remain open for workforce." A property acquisition agreement is used up front to ensure homes are for the workforce. Montgomery said the city is currently doing this with a Cold Spring subdivision. "They're agreeing to build those homes and to sell them for workforce housing as a part of the agreement."

The City of Page isn't as myopic as some residents have expressed in council meetings. The city has the resources and expertise to accomplish multiple tasks simultaneously. Now, it's a waiting game. What direction will the 2025 City Council go and what is going on under Lake Powell Boulevard?

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Darren Coldwell** is listed below.]

City/County Management Association
A State Affiliate of ICMA
2024

**Leadership
2024 Board of Directors**

Darren Coldwell – Director – City Manager, Page

Darren Coldwell has a rich and diverse background, transitioning from a successful business owner to a proficient public servant. **Darren**'s education from the University of Montana likely equipped him with the necessary knowledge and skills to excel in his professional endeavors, providing a strong foundation for his career. His tenure as City Manager of Page, Arizona, since 2019 has been marked by notable achievements and contributions to the community. **Darren**'s career trajectory showcases his adaptability and leadership skills. Starting as a business owner in Lincoln County, Montana, he transitioned smoothly into public service as the County Manager for the same county before joining the City of Page.

Under **Darren**'s leadership, City Parks in Page have seen significant enhancements, likely contributing to the quality of life for residents and attracting visitors. The development of new biking trails aligns with contemporary trends towards outdoor recreation and promotes tourism while encouraging healthy lifestyles for residents. **Darren**'s efforts in improving the financial stability of the city budget demonstrate his fiscal responsibility and strategic planning abilities, essential for effective governance. Winning awards such as the Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report (CAFR) reflects the city's commitment to transparency, accountability and sound financial management under **Darren**'s leadership. **Darren**'s successful management of projects like the roundabout on Highway 89 highlights his ability to navigate bureaucratic processes and secure funding for critical infrastructure improvements. Completion of projects like the Page Master Plan and rezoning of the Page Proper indicates **Darren**'s commitment to long-term strategic planning and sustainable development.

Darren's role in revitalizing the Lake Powell National Golf Course and expanding amenities like the Pro Shop and Mulligans Restaurant and Bar demonstrates his focus on economic development and enhancing recreational opportunities for residents and visitors alike. Under **Darren**'s tenure Page has exceeded 5 million visitors, surpassing even the Grand Canyon. Page has also become the state's largest European booking city, and the Asian is a close second.

Darren Coldwell's track record of success and his ability to spearhead diverse initiatives indicate his effectiveness as a leader and his dedication to the well-being and progress of the community he serves.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Lake Powell Chronicles
August 29, 2024

Council adopts Code of Ethics

By Bob Hembree

On Aug. 21, Page City Council adopted a Code of Ethics. The code covers disclosure of conflicts of interest, respecting confidentiality, meeting attendance and conduct in public. “Conduct of Members,” for example, states, “The professional and personal conduct of members must be above reproach and avoid even the appearance of impropriety. Members shall refrain from abusive conduct, personal charges or verbal attacks upon the character or motives of other members of the Council, commissions, boards, committees, staff and the public.”

“This is a working document and hopefully Council looks at this as a living document,” said City Manager **Darren Coldwell**. “As you go around and as you travel, if you see something that you would like to introduce to this and you think it's a good idea, I think it's very appropriate for you guys to bring it forward to the Council. As we continue with this with the boards and the commissions, it's going to give you some teeth to have more oversight with the president and vice president or the chair and vice chair.”

“I think it's really helpful. I think it helps us understand our role. I think it gives the citizens understanding of what we're trying to do, what the boards and commissions are trying to do,” said Councilor Kenna Hettinger. Mayor Bill Diak said, “It adds accountability to Council.”

The code passed unanimously after **Coldwell** and Hettinger helped Councilor Steve Kidman understand some of the code’s language. It was Kidman’s first meeting as a councilor; he is completing Brian Carey’s term and will become mayor in November. Diak told the Chronicle all council members signed the document after the meeting.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Lake Powell Chronicle
July 24, 2024

Communication Breakdown
Part Two: United by Misinformation
Bob Hembree

Misinformation takes many forms. Often it's creating false context around a grain of truth, a false narrative that derives from a superficial knowledge of a subject or intentional misdirection. Sometimes it's reframing an issue, drawing attention to cherry-picked aspects while hiding others, never giving a true representation of an issue. The most dangerous form of misinformation creates anger, pits people against each other, tribe against tribe, us-versus-them. A common theme throughout history is Citizens versus City Hall. Right or wrong, politicians and city officials are easy targets, easy to dehumanize.

At the June 18 City Council Candidate Debates arranged by the Page-Lake Powell Chamber of Commerce, candidate Tom Preller said, "A PR person, a social media manager, that is very much steps in the right direction. If you get a good feed coming out of the city of all the government ongoings, allow comments, allow input and questions to be asked, and allow that PR person to respond with factual information and sources cited, that's the only way you can do anything about misinformation is to correct it and back it up."

"There's so much misinformation out there, no matter what you do," said candidate Craig Simmons. "I guess the only way the city can combat misinformation is by putting the right information out. Without the right information out there, anywhere on social media or anywhere else, then all people think about is the hearsay. And of course, the hearsay always travels a lot faster than the right stuff." "Putting out correct information is the best way to combat misinformation," said candidate Amanda Hammond. "I think the city is already taking good steps in that direction by hiring a social media manager as well as [a] public relations manager. I think that they can go farther; overhauling the website needs to be done."

Speaking on the city's website, Vice Mayor John Kocjan said, "We need to put it in a smaller, concise form because that's what people are going to read, not have to read through all the minutiae that's out there."

The Chronicle spoke with Councilor Richard Leightner. As longtime Page resident, he's seen both sides of us-versus-them play out in local politics. "At that last councilor debate, I heard so much stuff come out that wasn't anywhere near true," said Leightner. "If you're going to run for council, why don't you get informed about everything and not just go with hearsay or what's on Facebook or whatever."

One of the most common threads in Page misinformation is not knowing what the city council can and can't control. Cities must abide by county, state and federal laws. For example, the 2016 Arizona Senate Bill 1350, enacted by former Governor Ducey, made it illegal for cities, towns,

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

or counties to prohibit short-term rentals. City operations are handled by the city manager. Councilors are not experts in everything they must make decisions on. They depend on the advice of experts, the pros and cons, then vote. The city manager sees that council's decisions are carried out. According to Mayor Bill Diak, past councils ignored expert recommendations and the city suffered for it. He said occasionally somebody comes along who thinks they know everything. They lead people astray. "There's a couple times in the history of the city where council basically did not listen to their city manager and their city staff, finance department, their economic development departments," said Diak. "Both times we've ended up in deep, deep financial trouble. And that's what I inherited when I first came into office in 2010." Speaking of the city's current financial state, Diak said, "We are one of very few cities in the state of Arizona and probably other states that is totally debt free and has money in the bank to do projects."

Before the Chronicle interview, Leightner said he spoke with the city manager and city department heads to verify his understanding of a variety of topics to dispel misinformation spreading through Page.

The US 89 Roundabout

Another misconception is that the city council can build a roundabout on US 89; that's in Arizona Department of Transportation's (ADOT) domain. "It really irks me when somebody says, 'Well, the city council did this or the city council didn't do this,'" said Leightner. "And especially on the roundabouts, there was talk that city council was holding up the roundabouts. And the plain and simple fact is those are a function of the State of Arizona, not the council, not the city. So we can make an application, like for the roundabout down here on the north exit, but we can't say when to do it or if it can be done. We just make the request. It was approved for this fiscal year, but we don't have any control over when. But we have heard that they're going to start breaking ground on that this fall. So we will have a second roundabout in Page."

The Swimming Pool

People spreading misinformation often exaggerate or minimize depending on which best supports an agenda or increases outrage. For example, a person claiming a 6-page court document is "very, very brief" if they are on the losing end and seeking to minimize the process leading to the decision, or someone claiming a swimming pool will cost citizens \$116 million when estimates are from under to \$15 million. "They were talking about exorbitant amounts of money for the swimming pool," said Leightner. "I have no idea where they got that. We bonded and we approved with public review to go out and get a bond. And even if the bond's \$15 million, it doesn't mean that we have to spend \$15 million. We want to put in a nice, usable, shareable with the schools swimming pool that does the job for what's needed.

"And the location of it, my goodness, we're going to put it down by the sports complex. That's where it should be. That's where the splash pad is gonna go. So that's gonna be the big recreation area. It's already started that way. And then they were talking about, 'Well, gee, how's our kids gonna get down there? You know, that's dangerous and stuff.' Well, my first answer to that is how do they get down to the ballgames that they go to three or four times a week? But apparently they haven't looked at the budget we just approved. We're going to pick up a shuttle

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

service and we're going to run a shuttle to Horseshoe Bend. The stops will be designated and we're pretty sure, certain that they can put a stop in for the sports complex. So there's not going to be the big issues that they're making up.”

Horseshoe Bend Funds

Money taken in at Horseshoe Bend can only be used for Horseshoe Bend. It’s an enterprise account like Page Utility Enterprises. Think of it as a separate entity, a separate business. The city can bill Horseshoe Bend for services provided, like accounting, police or maintenance staff. But the funds can’t be used for projects not related to Horseshoe Bend. “They are definitely restricted,” said Leightner. “We can’t take a million out of Horseshoe Bend funds and go do infrastructure over by the Marriott or up by the airport. Because that has nothing to do with Horseshoe Bend. So those are totally different budgeted items.”

Housing

Under the current City Council, City Manager **Darren Coldwell** and staff, 122 new homes were added in Page since January 2023. “That’s 122 keys, brand-new doors that have been opened in the city of Page,” said **Coldwell**. “So I think there is a misconception that nothing is happening on housing out there. There is stuff happening.”

Currently, the city is working with Coconino Community College (CCC) on new housing. Apartments for students and workforce below CCC are in the works with a developer. “It could be in three phases if they go all the way with what they're talking about,” said Leightner. “And it’ll be a pretty nice, pretty large development. Really, really nice. So we're working on housing. And I can tell you that all the present council members are dedicated to housing. We’ve got to get that done.”

Talks are also in progress with Habitat for Humanity for a cluster of small homes. Reaching out to Habitat for Humanity was suggested by Page Unified School Board President Sandra Kidman at the April 24 council meeting. Councilor Brian Carey and Leightner began talking with Habitat for Humanity Executive Director Eric Wolverton shortly after and gave a public council meeting presentation June 12.

Uptown Revitalization

Uptown revitalization and Lake Powell Boulevard are at the center of the most divisive and costly misinformation circulating in Page. A small group of citizens circulated a mixture of facts and misinformation through the community. They circulated petitions with misleading and false claims in an effort to block changes to Lake Powell Boulevard and to recall city councilors. Page Action Committee (PAC) leaders repeatedly claim 6,000 people signed their “survey” petition. What they leave out is that multiple people circulated the petitions within a 50-mile radius of Page. No attempts were made to verify if signers were Page residents. The signatures weren’t verified. When they did ask if signers were registered voters on a second petition for a ballot initiative, less than 800 signed and 18% of them were rejected in a random sampling.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Misinformation about the cost of Phase One of the “Streetscape” project is often two to three times the actual cost. “There’s a rumor that the current project is \$36 million,” said **Coldwell**. “It is closer to \$11 million and we have nearly \$5 million already saved and are very confident that we will receive a federal grant for an additional \$5 million.” The city began setting aside funds for the project three years ago. A letter dated June, 11 from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) notified Planning and Zoning Director Zachary Montgomery that the city’s grant application was reviewed and selected for further consideration. “I have also heard we are going to get rid of the Town House and Community Center,” said **Coldwell** “That is untrue! We are actually putting nearly \$200k into improvements for the Community Center this year.”

While reasonable arguments against some of the proposed Lake Powell Boulevard changes were made, they were tainted by misinformation and the combative behavior of a few PAC supporters in council meetings and social media. Possibly the most harmful and misleading action taken by PAC members was the recall petition used against Councilors David Auge and Mike Farrow. The Chronicle interviewed PAC chair Debra Roundtree Sept. 16, 2023 when talk of a recall began. “To me, until they take a stand and there's a vote, I don't feel like we should start removing people from office yet,” said Roundtree.” Otherwise we're just making assumptions as who will or who won't vote for it.”

Auge and Farrow voted against proceeding with Phase One of the Streetscape project. They learned the same night of the vote that they were the only councilors on the recall ballot. Auge and Farrow are the only ones not running for reelection because their terms don’t end until November 2026, so it could put PAC members in a position to take over the city.

Not one of the petition’s three sentences citizens were misled to sign were true.
Sentence 1: “For refusal to acknowledge constituent's over 1,550-signature opinion petition presented on September 27, 2023, to a regularly scheduled city council meeting where they were included on a public agenda concerning lane reductions to Lake Powell Boulevard thereby affecting citizens' daily lives and businesses.”

The statement is false. Roundtree was acknowledged at the Sept. 27, 2023 City Council meeting. Council allowed her to give a 27 minute presentation on why Lake Powell Boulevard should not be changed. The city also assisted Roundtree, projecting her stock slides to accompany her presentation. Farrow said the city clerk recorded it, therefore acknowledged it. The meeting including Roundtree’s presentation is available on the City of Page YouTube channel.

Sentence 2: “For refusal of allowing all his constituents the democratic process to vote on a matter potentially costing the citizenry 15-30 million dollars and making drastic changes to the major Main Street-Lake Powell Boulevard and choosing to represent therefore a fraction of his constituents by refusal to allow discussion or consideration allowing citizens to vote on proposed lane reductions to Lake Powell Boulevard during City Council meeting on October 25, 2023.”

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The statement is false. The PAC ballot measure to stop Lake Powell Boulevard development was not blocked by the city council; the petition did not meet Arizona constitutional requirements. It was never a council decision. Coconino County Superior Court confirmed the Page City Clerk’s determination and ruled against PAC. PAC filed an appeal and the Appellate Court ruled against PAC.

Sentence 3: “For refusal of allowing his constituents the democratic process by accepting their initiated ballot measure that had enough signatures and allowing his constituents to go to the ballot box in July 2024 to voice their opinion about Lake Powell Boulevard being reduced to 3 lanes.”

Sentence 3 is redundant. It repeats false accusations stated in sentence 2.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Darren Coldwell** is listed below. Omitted was the detailed information about other small towns/cities in Arizona.]

Arizona Daily Star, The (Tucson, AZ)
May 1, 2024

Rural communities struggle to keep young residents

Author: Sarah Lapidus and Lacey Latch

San Luis native Armando Esparza did what many young people in rural Arizona do: He left his hometown for the big city. Esparza moved from the agricultural community on the Arizona-Mexico border to study at Arizona State University and lived in Phoenix to build his career. Ten years later, he moved back to San Luis to work as the director of the city’s economic development department. “I was able to find a job opportunity where I can apply what I have learned in my years of economic development, and most importantly, I am able to grow,” he said about why he chose to move back. “This is not the case for a lot of people, but I was lucky.”

Esparza’s experience a decade ago is still common. That’s illustrated in a recent report gathered by Local First Arizona, a rural economic development nonprofit. The organization in 2023 surveyed 440 young people up to 25 years old, with more than 70% of participants under 18 years old. In the report titled “Perspectives from Youth and Young Adults of Rural Arizona,” eight out of 10 respondents said they must leave their hometowns to find a quality career opportunity. Young people pointed to job quality and the lack of affordable housing as detractors in their small communities, the majority of which have populations well below 10,000 people. Rural city and town officials also stressed the lack of affordable housing, which they see as the primary obstacle forcing young people to leave. But the consequences of that familiar story were upended when the COVID-19 pandemic struck.

Rural communities see pandemic boom

At the state's other end lies Page, with a population of 7,400 people who live just a handful of miles south of the Arizona-Utah border. It’s renowned for its access to famous outdoor attractions like Lake Powell and Horseshoe Bend. Closure of the Navajo Generating Station in 2019 was a major employment and economic loss. But the city doubled down on its destination marketing during the pandemic to attract visitors. Page has seen 24 consecutive months of tax growth, City Manager **Darren Coldwell** said. “We have spent the money to chase the buck, and it's paid off,” he said.

Data from the U.S. Census Bureau shows the population of small cities and towns across Arizona was largely unaffected by the pandemic. While each of the municipalities in this story suffered a dip in population at the outset of the pandemic in 2020, they each stabilized in 2021. In most cases, that stabilization led to growth in 2022, according to the Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program. But leaders across northern Arizona also acknowledge they can’t rely on tourism forever, especially as the allure of Historic Route 66 fades from memory. “Eventually there's going to be a time where no one knows what ‘Standing on the Corner in

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Winslow, Arizona' is," said Winslow city manager David Coolidge, and the city needs to prepare for that. City leaders are trying to highlight the unique opportunities presented by Winslow's location in northeast Arizona — access to Interstate 40, the BNSF railway and a regional airport that could propel it into a future as a trade hub for the southwest. Construction on the I-40 trade port, a nearly 4,000-acre advanced logistics and manufacturing park, has recently begun in the city.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

[CB&A Note: **Darren Coldwell** is not mentioned in this article, however because he was the City Manager at the time of the lawsuit filing, we have included it.]

Lake Powell Chronicle
April 17, 2024

PAC sues Page over rejected petition
By Bob Hembree

The Page Action Committee (PAC) filed a lawsuit against the City of Page. The PAC attempted to stop proposed improvements to Lake Powell Boulevard with a ballot petition. According to a response letter sent to PAC chairperson Debra Roundtree, the rejected petition didn't meet constitutional prerequisites.

During the public comment period of the April 10 Page City Council meeting, Roundtree said, "The next suit that we'll be filing will be an injunction. So that's what I'm here to talk to you about tonight, is that we have a list of concerns that we've been bringing to you as board members. We've been trying to convince you that we're concerned about open meeting law violations, other violations that are going on. And then if you would look at the record for the past seven to 10 years, as I have, of the open meeting Freedom of Information Act, you would see that there are some glaring inconsistencies. And our lawyer originally worked for the Attorney General's office, so he's helped us be able to identify some open meeting law things that we have concerns about right now."

Roundtree made multiple claims and accusations that were refuted by city officials, including one that a contractor bid was awarded for Lake Powell Boulevard improvements. The bidding period was still open at the time. A winning bid must first be approved by council in a public meeting. That didn't happen. She also claimed landlords were "being told not to rent to somebody," but offered no details.

Then she complained about a Facebook post. "Our biggest concern," said Roundtree, "And I don't know if the rest of you are OK with this, but Councilman Carey chose to post the letter and part of it that you guys sent to my PAC on Saturday." She explained she was out of town and didn't immediately receive the notification. "Before even 24 hours was up, you had a council member who was posting the letter that you sent us on social media," Roundtree continued. "I don't see how that's OK. My legal team didn't have time to look at it. Our donors didn't have time. Our PAC didn't have time to meet it. But social media already had that letter. So we know that there are some legalities there. Those things are not OK."

Carey acknowledged the post reply and explained to Roundtree that the documents she referred to are public records and he had quoted from the rejection letter to provide information that was left out of social media posts. "Miss Roundtree brought up a response I made to a post by Chuck Straub, who I assume is affiliated with the PAC," said Carey. "And the comment that I made was to give the reason that the city had rejected the PAC request for an initiative that was referred to

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

the PAC in a letter from the city. That is a public document. I asked for permission to quote from that public document to make sure that the post on a particular Facebook group was accurate, and I did so. And so that's the facts of that matter. Public document, a public post in response to a post by a member of the PAC, which left the reasons out. So I just wanted to throw the facts out. It's a pretty simple reason for the rejection, as has been referred to here. So just want to clear the record on that.”

Coconino County court documents verified Debra Roundtree, Steven Kidman and PAC are taking legal action against the City of Page. Both parties are running for Page City Council seats next election. Their legal counsel is asking the Coconino Country Supreme Court to compel the City of Page to process a rejected petition. The political action committee is represented by Jim Barton of Barton Mendez Soto PLLC in Tempe, Arizona.

A hearing presided by Judge Cathleen Brown Nichols is scheduled for 2 p.m. April 18.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Lake Powell Chronicle
March 20, 2024

Page Police to provide safety officers to PUSD

By Bob Hembree

On March 13, Page City Council approved an agreement between the City of Page and Page Unified School District (PUSD) to provide school safety officers. PUSD received an Arizona Department of Education’s Stronger Connection Grant to cover the costs for the 2023 - 2026 school years. Page Police Department doesn’t have the staff to provide PUSD a full-time officer, so the agreement is flexible. Officers can work extra-duty hours on their time off to make extra money.

“This opportunity, is a fantastic especially for some of the new officers,” said City Manager **Darren Coldwell**. “I’m almost embarrassed what a starting salary is for a man who puts a bulletproof vest on every single day. So this will give them an opportunity to bring in some extra cash.”

The city will bill PUSD \$85 an hour for the service. Part of the rate covers administrative, vehicles, insurance and other expenses. Page Police Chief Tim Lange told the Chronicle officers receive a flat rate of \$64 per hour for extra duty services. “The kids will get to know our people,” said Lange. “If the opportunities arise where our officers can teach classes or even sit in classrooms while certain subjects are being taught, that's going to be a benefit for us. It's a benefit for the kids. It's a benefit for the school.” When Lange was approached by the school, he thought it was a great idea. The flexible agreement is based on officer availability. It’s understood an officer may need respond to an off-campus emergency. “At the end of the day, our primary job is to answer those calls for service and respond to public safety issues,” said Lange. “All this other stuff is extra, and yeah, it's going to give our guys the opportunity to make some extra money, but what's important to me is it's going to enhance school safety.”

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Lake Powell Chronicle
March 20, 2024

Page Business grants are back on the table

By Bob Hembree

Page City Council discussed bringing back a revised version of its facade improvement program. Little interest was shown by local businesses in applying for the 50/50 grants to update their storefronts. City Manager **Darren Coldwell** believes the amount of red tape and qualifying conditions made the process too troublesome and expensive for businesses. an “It's daunting, to say the least, for the applicant,” said **Coldwell**. “I would like to put a lot more responsibility on Zach and Brett to do some of this rather than a licensed engineer and you know that they have to spend more money than what the money is they're going to spend on the project.”

Coldwell referred to Planning Director Zachary Montgomery and Building Official Brett Slavens. In **Coldwell's** proposed plan the city would match the cost of store improvements up to \$20,000. The previous plan was only available to uptown businesses along Lake Powell Boulevard and Block 17. All businesses in the city limits can apply with the new plan. Another change is the scope of qualifying projects. **Coldwell** suggested going beyond exterior improvements. “I think it should be both inside and outside and I think it should be every business,” he said. “I don't think it should just be Main Street. Anybody who wants to improve their setting should have the opportunity.”

Councilor Richard Lightener indicated at least two businesses he's familiar with are “highly interested” in the program. If an overall dollar amount is approved by council, the funds will likely be available in next year's budget

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Lake Powell Chronicle
March 6, 2024

Council increases city manager spending authority

By Bob Hembree

On Feb. 28, Page City Council voted 6-1 in favor of increasing city manager spending limits from \$20,000 to \$100,000 for budgeted items. The move follows the Jan. 10 council decision to increase Page Utility Enterprises (PUE) board and manager spending limits to \$600,000 and \$300,000 respectively. The central arguments for the increases were rising prices and increasing management efficiency. In the past, items preapproved by council in the city's budget would require a second approval if manager spending limits were exceeded.

Counselor Theresa Lee cast the dissenting vote, citing long term concerns. "It's nothing against **Darren**," said Lee, referring to city manager **Darren Coldwell**. "It's for (the) future, because we all come and go, and then we look at it after somebody's already had access to it. I have a problem jumping \$80,000. I really do. And I realize we're seeing things that we've authorized. However, as things are increasing in price, we want to see that the \$20,000 lawn mower that we approved in June of last year is now \$50,000. We want to see that. So I have a problem jumping 80 grand. I'd be more comfortable at 50."

Counselor David Auge, countering Lee's argument, said "I'm sorry, but it boils down to trust. We hired **Darren** for his past accomplishments, what he's been doing for us. And I'm sorry. If we don't trust him now, then he needs to pack his bags and be gone. And as far as I'm concerned, I trust **Darren** and have faith in him, his track record for us. And going forward, as I say, I trust him." Vice Mayor John Kocjan, supporting Auge's comment, said, "It's in the budget or it's not. It's that simple."

Coldwell reassured Lee, "Theresa, I'll be very responsive to your concerns, even if it's just going to you." "Thank you," said Lee. "And I know you would. That's why I said it's not against you."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Lake Powell Chronicle
March 6, 2024

Council caps Emergency Reserve at \$12 million

By Bob Hembree

On Feb. 28, Page City Council voted to cap the city’s emergency reserve fund at \$12 million. On July 24, 2019, six months before COVID-19 shook the world, the fund was established to keep the city running in an emergency.

The fund, following Finance Director Linda Watson’s recommendation, began with \$8 million, \$6 million in an existing reserve and \$2 million from the general fund. In 2019, council wanted enough in the reserve to run the city government for one year. Watson, addressing the council, said, “Our expenses for the last 12-month period were right about \$12.2 million for the general fund so this amount is inclusive of operating and personnel cost but it does not include interfund transfers. At this point there are various motions; as you can see on this council communication, it would be my recommendation if it is the council's pleasure to increase that \$3.5 million reserve to \$8 million as one option.”

At the time, Watson said setting aside the full \$12.2 million would stress the city’s finances and recommended gradually building up to the full amount. Council agreed and the fund was established with an important stipulation: Accessing the money would require a 75% council majority.

Currently, the fund is \$11.2 million, according to City Manager **Darren Coldwell**. He anticipates reaching \$12 million by the end of the year. “I mean, we went through COVID and we never touched it,” said **Coldwell**. “We made some hard choices.” He pointed out that the city makes adjustments in spending when needed.

“We've had a few ups and downs, but we continue to grow,” said Mayor Bill Diak, then asked **Coldwell**, “How many months in a row?” **Coldwell** replied, “Forty-six months in a row of increased tax revenues, even through COVID.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Darren Coldwell** is listed below.]

Targeted News Service (USA)
December 1, 2023

Arizona Public Service Co.: Arizona Electric Utilities Provide Grants to Support Economic Development, Operations & Training in Coal Plant Communities

Author: Private Sector

Arizona Public Service Co. issued the following news:

Five organizations serving Arizona communities impacted by the transition away from coal-fired power plants were selected this fall to receive a cumulative total of over \$134,000 in economic development grants from the Utilities' Grant Funding Program. The program provides critical support to communities near impacted coal plants to develop new, sustainable economic strategies for their residents and other stakeholders. Funding is provided by Tucson Electric Power (TEP), Arizona Public Service (APS) and Salt River Project (SRP). This is the program's second round of grant awards made in 2023.

The City of Page will receive \$25,000 to help cover the costs of hiring a grant-writing consulting firm to prepare applications for larger federal grants. The firm is also identifying additional grant opportunities to support transportation and economic development efforts, including broadband and community facilities and business incubators. "I want to thank our Arizona utilities that so generously contribute to this grant so that small communities like Page can do good work for their residents," said **Darren Coldwell**, City Manager. "Without the generosity of the Utilities Grant Funding Program, we would never be able to partner with such a firm."

TEP, APS and SRP pledged a combined \$1 million in awards available through the Utilities' Grant Funding Program. Area-specific tribal, state and local governments, public schools, economic development groups and nonprofit groups are eligible to apply. More details about submission eligibility and requirements are available here (<https://www.srpnet.com/grid-water-management/grid-management/improvement-projects/coal-communities-transition>). The third grant application cycle is now open. Applications are due by Friday, Dec. 15, 2023.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Lake Powell Chronicle
September 27, 2023

The City of Page awarded Best 2023 Cybersecurity Score
By Bob Hembree

The City of Page belongs to many organizations geared toward better governing and management, including Arizona Municipal Risk Retention Pool (AMRRP). One of the benefits of an AMRRP membership is a Bitsight testing, evaluation and security rating.

Speaking at the Sept. 13 City Council Meeting, City Manager **Darren Coldwell** said that Page has the “highest score in the AMRRP pool.” “Basically, they tried to attack Kane two years in a row, and he was the best in the state,” **Coldwell** said, referring to City of Page Information Technology Director Kane Scott. “Page was No. 1, most efficient, couldn't get through.

There are 70 members in the AMRRP pool. In fact, Page is better than 90% of the government agencies nationwide.” “This is really, really a big deal because, I don't know if you see how everybody from Russia to China to Asia, they attempt to attack local agencies and then hold them for ransom,” **Coldwell** said. “They just attacked Phoenix hospitals, and I still don't know what they're going to do, if they're going to pay or what they're going to do. To be able to deflect those guys that know what they're doing is a pretty big deal.”

There were over 263 million ransomware attacks worldwide in the first half of 2022. A whopping 71% of organizations worldwide were affected by ransomware attacks in 2022.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Lake Powell Chronicle
September 27, 2023

Page’s Streetscape plans under fire
Part Two: When citizens start to object late in the process
By Bob Hembree

“It’s hard to back that train uphill and not have costs involved with it.” – City of Page Mayor Bill Diak

The Streetscape project, after of years public notices, open house presentations and gathering community input, is the talk of town. Some are hearing about it for the first time, and judging comments at the Sept. 13 city council work session, some are outraged.

City of Page Mayor Diak told the Chronicle that Page Lake Powell Chamber of Commerce was instrumental in reaching out to local businesses about Streetscape in the exploration stages of the project. “[They were] saying, hey, this is what’s going on. This is when these meetings are. Please participate, because the city and [those] doing the legwork for us are seeking information on what they’re proposing and your input,” Diak said. “When that plan started, there was nothing for that street [Lake Powell Blvd]. It was developed out of those meetings, and there [were] people in City Hall up and down. The whole hallway was filled with charts and everything. Matter of fact, we ought to get those charts and just paste them up before the next meeting.”

Streetscape became the project title once J2 Engineering was hired in 2020. The city took its first steps in November 2018 under the name Downtown Revitalization Plan. The first public meetings were held Dec. 3 and 4 from 5-7 p.m. at the Page Community Center. Lake Powell Chronicle covered the story in their Nov. 28, 2018, issue. According to the Steven Law’s reporting, “The downtown revitalization area includes North Lake Powell Boulevard from highway 89, block 17 (which is the block containing Mesa Theater, Boston’s Hardware, Pow-Wow Trading Post and other businesses), the Safeway block, the businesses along 6th avenue and John C. Page Park. “One of the city’s strategic priorities from fiscal year 2016/17 was initiating a master streetscape plan which identified strategies, policies and feasibilities for improving the aesthetics and appeal for Page’s downtown and block 17.”

In the 2018 article, Levi Tappan, Page’s mayor at the time, said, “I hope to get the businesses on board and excited about this and together turn it into a real nice, walkable downtown.” “The people who built this town also built a dam and a power plant,” he said. “They are men and women of industry. I’d like to find a way to honor that history and heritage and incorporate that as we re-brand and revitalize the town.”

Tappan hoped the design would reflect Page’s modern-industrial heritage. The Chronicle spoke with the Tappan again on Sept. 15, 2023. He still likes the modern industrial theme for Page. The former mayor is also considering another run for the office in 2024. Residents objecting to Streetscape at council meetings voiced a wide variety of concerns, many based on

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

misinformation. The most common complaint was the proposed changes for Lake Powell Boulevard. The owner of R D's Drive-In is worried about parking and delivery truck access. According to Debi Roundtree, Antelope Canyon tour companies are concerned about traffic congestion slowing their tour shuttles. “Our major players on the mesa, who are probably bringing more tax dollars than anybody else, can't continue their tour businesses,” said Roundtree. “If they do what they're doing, they have to move off the mesa. And the reservation's been trying to convince them to put businesses out on the reservation so they get the tax dollars. And so they're angry enough now that they could do that. And this isn't going to just hurt the City of Page a little. It's going to hurt it huge if they do that. One company says they won't be able to operate the buses correctly and how they have to enter and exit their business. So, he said I won't have a choice. He said I will have to move off the main street.”

The Chronicle asked Page City Manager **Darren Coldwell** about how the changes in Lake Powell Boulevard would affect the tour companies. “Streetscape is designed to create and incentivize business,” **Coldwell** said. “It's not being created to hurt business whatsoever. Our traffic study, which there were some misconceptions in a way, there were some misstatements Wednesday evening [at the council meeting], and the traffic study was done June 29 and June 30 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. So the week basically before the fourth, one of the busiest weeks of our year. It found that it was going to slow traffic down about 4.8 seconds from North Navajo to South Navajo compared to what it is now. “[The tour companies] come out with two stoplights left, and so you got a block and a half that they have to go. It shouldn't really affect them. If it's that bad for a block and a half, then we really will have a problem, but it's designed not to.”

Coldwell stressed he is willing to listen to concerns and that adjustment are possible if warranted. He's said this at all public hearings regarding Streetscape. Executive Administrative Assistant Robin Crowther is frequently seen handing out contact information at city council meetings. “I've spoken to three people. Three people have, after all of these comments, 1,100 signatures, three people have come in to speak with me,” **Coldwell** told the Chronicle on Sept 16.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Lake Powell Chronicle
September 5, 2023

New Code Red alert system helps Page residents stay informed

Bob Hembree

The City of Page is making it easier for residents to stay informed and to receive Page-specific emergency alerts. City Manager **Darren Coldwell** first announced the new system at the June 14, 2023, city council meeting. “Kane has been working on, under my direction and under the police and fire, a new alerting system for the City of Page in case there's ever an emergency,” **Coldwell** said.

The new Code Red system is now operational. The online software, in addition to sending emergency alerts, enhances the city’s efforts to keep Page residents informed about events and public meetings.

The Chronicle met with Page’s information technology director, Kane Scott to learn more. “What we want the citizens to know is if they go to the cityofpage.org website now, right below the main picture, is this emergency notification system,” Scott said. “And what this new system is doing is it's allowing them to not only get an alert if there’s something big emergency-wise, but it’s allowing them to sign up for community meetings – i.e., council meetings and whatever meetings and also events that are coming up. So the event people will be sending out reminders that the balloon regatta thing is today or we’re having July 4 or movies in the park or stuff like that. Simply by clicking on that, it takes them to an explanation page that tells them all about it.”

Page residents who don’t go to council meetings, read the local newspaper or visit the city’s webpage regularly are sometime surprised by city projects in the works and protest. Uninformed citizens often hear development news long after advertised public meetings were held, long after months or years of time and public funds were invested. In other words, uninformed citizens potentially waste public resources.

Page’s updated website demonstrates its transparency and its efforts to keep community members informed on every aspect of city government. Online visitors can browse the city’s finances, read the minutes of council and board meetings, or read the discussion and action agendas scheduled for upcoming meetings.

“People are still saying that we're not getting enough information out, but we’re trying very hard to put this data everywhere,” Scott said. “We're trying to do more ‘instant.’ So something that goes in the mail, you might not get or you get late. This will do even more. So they’ve just got to sign up.”

Code Red is free, and users have the option to receive notices by text, voice or email. The basic setup includes emergency alerts like unsafe water warnings or building fires. Emergencies in Page might be rare, but citizens can also choose to receive event and public meeting reminders.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The system is still new to Page, and more data will be loaded for upcoming events and meetings. Scott said the alerts and reminders will be brief and include links for additional information.

City Council meetings provide downloadable “PDF Agenda Packets” that are often quite large. The Aug. 23 packet, for example, is 139 pages of text, images and diagrams – too large for a text, phone or even an email message. “Everything is based off the website,” Scott said. “You can easily get to all of the public meetings. And the other button we made even better, ClearGov, which is a revenue project, expenditures and your tax dollars at work. If you click there, then you can get in and see – I mean, you can literally go to our checkbook and search.”

Scott wants all Page residents to go to cityofpage.org homepage, “click on the emergency notification system and sign up.”

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

Arizona Daily Sun, The (Flagstaff, AZ)
May 4, 2023

Recycle pickup to resume Monday as city occupies facility, pays Norton \$75,000

Author: Adrian Skabelund

As of 8 a.m. Thursday, the City of Flagstaff occupied the recycling facility on Butler Avenue that had been operated by Norton Environmental for more than two decades. Hours later, city employees in reflective vests and hard hats could still be seen milling about the grounds, assessing the condition of the space and preparing to turn it into a transfer facility.

The move came after solid waste section head Evan Tyrrell and public works director Scott Overton informed Flagstaff City Council the city would be looking to bring recycle pickup back online as soon as Monday. At that same special meeting, Council voted unanimously to approve the termination of the lease and contract with Norton Environmental and to transfer control and ownership of the facility and equipment back to the city. The termination agreement approved by city council came with a \$75,000 payment to Norton for transfer of the facility and termination of the original contract. "This payment, we feel, is justified as it is very expensive and costly to not have a home to take our recyclables to," Overton told Council.

The president of Norton Environmental, Joseph Balog, said the payment is in lieu of what could have been an estimated \$250,000 payment from the city this year. Estimates from city staff had that payment closer to \$450,000 for this year. That payment would have been for failing to meet the minimum amount of recyclable material the city agreed to deliver Norton within the original contract. Throughout the contract with Norton, the city has only ever been able to collect and deliver a fraction of the recycled material promised within the contract. Bolag said Flagstaff routinely owed Norton for undelivered material at the end of each year.

"Under the terms of the contract, Flagstaff had a minimum amount of material to deliver to the plant yearly. Typically Flagstaff owed Norton over \$350,000 at the end of each contract year under the contract minimum," Balog wrote. "In an agreement made with the city, Norton accepted \$75,000 to terminate the contract, and each party agreed to release the other party with no further liability between Norton and the City of Flagstaff." Under the original contract, Norton had control and ownership of the facility, but that would have reverted back to the city when the contract ended in September. Balog also confirmed that the combination of the facility fire last week and the weak market for recycling led to the sudden closure of the facility, which employed eight people at the time of its closure.

Several councilmembers and City Manager Greg Clifton applauded the work of city staff in working so quickly on the matter. "It's been around-the-clock involvement," Clifton said. "I find it remarkable to say the least that we are now occupying this facility as soon as [May 4]. I would not have thought that was within the realm of possibilities here." The city is now working to convert the facility quickly into a transfer center so materials can be collected, brought to the site and loaded onto a truck and brought to Phoenix. Converting the facility into a simple transfer

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

station won't take much, Overton said. Because sorting through the recycling will all take place in Phoenix, the only equipment they really need is a scale to weigh the truck and recycled materials, and heavy equipment such as a front-end loader to move the materials from the collection vehicles to the semi truck. Those operations will likely be contracted out as well, although city employees might be onsite to oversee the operations, Overton said.

That facility, operated by the City of Phoenix, has already agreed to begin taking materials from Flagstaff, despite the current lack of a signed intergovernmental agreement between the two municipalities. A signed agreement is expected within the month. With the question of where recycling materials will go solved, the remaining question is just how to get it there.

Overton said the city is quickly looking to find a company to begin trucking the materials down to the Valley. He said that will likely be a shorter-term contract as a stop-gap measure just to get service back up and running. Once that is achieved, the city will seek a longer contract to get a better deal for the city and taxpayers. This short-term solution is expected to be in place for three to four weeks, bringing recycling pickup back while giving city staff time to draw up longer-term contracts.

Overton said it was too early to tell what the price tag on a short-term contract for such a service would be. If a company to bring materials to Phoenix can't be lined up, recycle pickup will still resume on Monday, but materials will be brought to the landfill. Overton and Tyrrell, however, seem confident that transportation could be located in time.

Even so, Tyrrell said in that circumstance, the city might be able to store the materials until they can be brought to the Phoenix facility at a later time. But is Flagstaff unique in its recycling woes in terms of northern Arizona communities? It's a mixed bag. The City of Williams doesn't offer its residents residential recycling pickup. Residents can opt to drop recyclables off at the transfer facility in Williams themselves. Those materials are then delivered to the company Waste Management in Flagstaff to process, a Williams sanitation manager said.

Up in Page there are currently no recycling services available to residents or commercial businesses, said Page City Manager **Darren Coldwell**. That city contracts with the company Republic Services to collect trash. Republic Services had offered recycling services to residents as well, but **Coldwell** said after industry changes forced the company to truck all recyclables to a facility near Las Vegas, the company removed the recycling service. The city has been without recycling services for about a year and a half. It should be noted that both communities, as with most across northern Arizona, are significantly smaller than Flagstaff.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Lake Powell Chronicle
March 13, 2023

Page City Council mulls cost of recreation center
Douglas Long

Support for the construction of an indoor recreation and aquatic center has been growing in recent months among many residents of Page. Last week, City Manager **Darren Coldwell** led a discussion by City Council that sought to address one of the biggest questions pertaining to establishing such a facility in Page: How will it be paid for? The March 8 meeting, which was open to the public, was attended by around 25 local residents.

Coldwell provided an overview of the recreation and aquatic center but also, more importantly, the financial aspects of the project. He made it clear that the meeting was just the first step in the process of deciding whether such a facility could or should be built. “Even the drawing that you’re going to see is literally just myself and a couple other people working with an architect to project what we were thinking might be an asset to this city,” he said. “It’s going to take a lot of time and a lot of effort from staff to make this thing go, and if it’s not something council is sincere about or wants to pursue, we don’t want to put in the time and effort.”

The “drawing” **Coldwell** referred to was an architect’s rendering of what the recreation and aquatic center might look like, based on suggestions from community members concerning what they would want included. The 44,000-square-foot facility was designed in three separate squares so that it could be built in sections. The first section includes offices for working staff, a gymnastics and dance room, a weight room, a babysitting room, a climbing wall and a room available for social functions or for teaching classes. The second section encompasses two racquetball courts, four batting cages and two basketball courts, with four locker rooms that would enable the facility to host basketball and volleyball tournaments. The third section includes a six-lane, Olympic-size lap pool where swim meets could be held, as well as a kiddie pool. The plan also includes an outdoor lazy river, the only portion of the facility that is outside and therefore seasonal.

The cost of building the facility as presented would be at least \$37 million, **Coldwell** said. He added that Page’s budgeted excise tax revenues for the 2022-23 fiscal year were around \$16.9 million, far short of the funds necessary to build the facility. On top of this would be annual operating costs, estimated to be around \$2.5-2.8 million, for necessities such as liability insurance, staff and maintenance. The only option for coming up with the funding would be for the city to go out to bond and into debt, **Coldwell** said. “This is where, as a city manager, I start to worry and potentially can’t sleep at night. Page is one of the few cities, probably literally in the United States, that has zero debt,” **Coldwell** said. “This, going forward, is going to commit for probably 25 years the people on this days and the people that sit in my chair to quite a bit of debt and how to pay for it going forward.”

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

A \$37 million bond for 25 years would mean about \$2.5 million taken out of operating funds each year. This could also be paid for by increasing city sales tax – in which case, costs would be shared by the city’s 5 million visitors as well as its citizens – or through a general obligation bond, in which the residents of the city pay would through an increase in property tax. “The problem that council has is, can you sell that? Can you sell to the residents of Page that every single home here is going to get that amount of value out of this facility?” **Coldwell** asked council members. “It all depends on how much you guys support this facility and how well you sell to the people in the audience. The senior citizen is going to have to be shown they they’re going to get their money’s worth out of this project.” After presenting the financial data, **Coldwell** said he wanted the City Council to give directive for him to create a citizens committee comprising six to eight people “who are sincerely interested in the project and sincerely are willing to give their time to this.”

Reactions to the city manager’s presentation were mixed. Councilor David Auge said he thought that going out to bond would not be “very palatable” for the city, especially considering current inflation rates and the likelihood that the city’s electricity rates will increase by 40% between July and January. “You said raise your hand and raise the sales tax,” Auge said, referring to the ability of City Council to vote on a sales tax increase, but “the other hand is going to be grabbed by the citizenry and we’re going to be ... tarred and feathered, probably.”

Mayor Bill Diak suggested that other funding sources could be tapped to minimize the financial damage, including philanthropy, donations and grants. **Coldwell** said the grant process has already begun, with funding for rural communities offering the best prospects for the proposed facility.

Councilor Brian Carey said he totally supported having a recreation center in Page, and his priority would be building the aquatic section first. “No question, this is a passionate project, number one on my list. It’s what I ran on, and I will support it until someone kicks me off the council,” he said. “The reason we added to the pool concept is because our current city’s facilities are not supporting what we want to do with our youth programs and our adult programs. And the school, through their own set of pressures, have been unreliable partners in sharing facilities.” He suggested that money could be taken from the city’s current emergency fund to reduce the amount of debt needed to build the facility. “In my opinion, we’re sitting on an emergency fund that’s continuing to grow by over half a million dollars every year, is not going to be needed because I can’t anticipate a worse situation to affect our tourism than the pandemic,” Carey said. “There is more money that could be removed from that emergency fund if we capped it at the original concept of \$8 million, which is about 60% of our operating budget and would handle any issues.” Carey agreed with **Coldwell** on the need for a citizens committee to help “mine all of the ideas and the sources” that could help steer the recreation center project in the right direction. “I do think the citizens are going to put some skin into the game for that. I also think that this council needs to decide. If we’re going to have this, we need to pay for something because it’s not going to be free. There’s no question,” he said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Councilor Mike Farrow said the recreation and aquatic facility would help the city establish structured youth programs, which he believes are necessary, but he added that he didn't think the council was at a point where it could say "yay or nay" to the project. "We don't understand the footprint yet and how do we wrap the cost to the footprint. I do believe that a committee should be started, and it should have more homework done on it. They should look at a broader area of funding, they should look at getting a broader area of services," he said. "I'm concerned because we're still looking at our water supply, we have other contingencies that are not COVID-based, but we do have to weigh the overall – where's our water, where's our power?"

Since the March 8 meeting was not scheduled for any action or direction, Diak adjourned after an hour-long discussion with the expectation that the issue will return as an agenda item at a regular City Council meeting in the near future.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

City of Page, Arizona
FY2023 Budget
Last updated October 31, 2022



GOVERNMENT FINANCE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

*Distinguished
Budget Presentation
Award*

PRESENTED TO

**City of Page
Arizona**

For the Fiscal Year Beginning

July 01, 2021

Christopher P. Morill
Executive Director

Budget Message **Darren Coldwell**, City Manager

Mayor Diak and Members of Page City Council: The annual budget assures the efficient, effective, and economic use of the City’s resources, as well as establishing that the highest priority objectives are accomplished. Through the budget, the City Council and staff set the direction of the City. The budget is expected to keep in mind both the positive and negative events happening within the City of Page. This document gives the City Council an ability to allocate resources and establish priorities. The Fiscal Year 2023 Budget is respectfully submitted to Mayor Diak, the City Council, and residents of Page, Arizona. This budget represents the City Council’s commitment to strong financial management practices and a strategic plan for continued growth and a sustained future. This budget document has been a collaboration between the City Manager, Department Managers, City staff, and members of the Page City Council to be used as a tool to identify funding priorities, reflect the needs and desires of the community, and to guide management throughout the year by clearly setting forth the goals and objectives of the Council for the coming year. As a whole, the City of Page is in a strong financial position considering the economic challenges that are currently in Page. The authorization of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act has helped stabilize funding for specific funds such as Emergency Services and Page Airport, albeit a temporary x to a complicated problem. Several problems have played a role in the economic future of our City including:

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

- High unemployment due to decreased tourism numbers and other tourism related jobs.
- The closing of the Navajo Generating Station.

Although these problems will take several years to overcome, there are signs of an improving economy, such as:

- Page’s tourism numbers have begun to increase, especially on the weekends.
- Many community groups are working to improve the economic situation in the City.
- A noticeable increase of interest in corporate leaders in the City of Page.
- An uptick of developers expressing wants to begin new planned communities.

The recovery process has already begun, which will enhance the goal of being a stable economy and consequently predictable steadfast revenues. The City of Page’s taxable revenue for the General Fund has been on a steady incline since the COVID pandemic eased in the last couple of years or so. Last fiscal year (2022) the City sales tax revenue increased by \$2.4M from the previous year (2021) where we received \$11.1 in Sales Tax Revenue. The City of Page has seen a record increase in sales tax contributions to the General Fund as of FY 2022. We closed the year with the highest number in sales tax revenue being received in one year thus far with a total of \$13,609,435. The City of Page once again saw a substantial increase in health insurance costs this year of around 12% that was added to this year’s budget. In reviewing the past performance of our policy, Page has been very lucky to be able to keep this cost down. For over the last five years, an increase of just over 2% was passed on to the General Fund budget. With this ever increasing expense, the City Council may need to consider a greater contribution from the employees. I will continue to review our policy and continue to entertain new options for employee health insurance coverage.

This fiscal year we re-evaluated our staffing needs, working with department directors, positions were added, or revised based on the department's needs. A reorganization of departments to increase efficiency has been implemented. The departments that have seen changes are Fire, Police, Public Works, Horseshoe Bend, Recreation, Library, Finance, and Lake Powell National Golf Course. In fiscal year 2022, the City budgeted 148 FTEs, a decrease of 3 FTEs from the prior year. This current FY 2023 shows our FTE’s of 161, an increase of approximately 13 FTE positions that were reduced in the last two fiscal years. It is of the utmost importance that the City Council continues to review all salaries and staffing needs for future budgets.

The City Council looked outside of the box and made creative thinking a must for the success of the entire City of Page this year. It is my opinion that with continued changes the City of Page will achieve its goal of being fiscally sound and revenue positive.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Arizona Daily Sun, The (Flagstaff, AZ)
December 31, 2021

Economy Year in Review: Airport fees, government grants and flooding fallout in Flagstaff
Author: Daily Sun Staff

This year marked an up-and-down endeavor for individuals, businesses and governments alike in trying to recover from the economic damage caused by the pandemic over the last 20 months. Here are the top economic stories for 2021:

Airport fees

Just this week, the Flagstaff City Council voted to approve an ordinance that would eliminate free parking at the airport and instead require travelers to pay up to \$8 per day and \$48 per week starting early next year. According to airport director Barney Helmick, charging for parking is necessary to pay for the \$4.9 million borrowed from the city's general fund to cover the construction of an additional parking lot and other improvements to the existing parking lot. The airport long outgrew the existing 385-space Terminal Lot. The airport has expanded significantly in recent years with multiple routes and more than 124,000 passengers departing from the airport in 2019, Helmick explained. The new lot -- dubbed the Terminal Economy Lot -- is currently under construction. It will more than double the number of parking spaces by adding 413 spots, ideally alleviating the parking overflow during the peak spring and summer seasons. The lot will also feature internal walkways and a sidewalk to the terminal. The addition of the new lot will also allow for further expansion of electric vehicle charging stations, bike paths and improve bus usage.

ARPA relief funding

Flagstaff City Council spent time addressing how more than \$13 million in federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding should be spent, coming to a consensus on the budget in October. The budget includes \$1.9 million toward housing; \$2.5 million to alternate response services and a care center; \$1.5 million toward cyber security and other government infrastructure; \$1.4 million to nonprofit support; \$635,000 toward small business recovery; and \$600,000 to pre-K and STEAM education. The federal funding was allocated to the city from the State and Local Recovery Funds, which is a subset of the \$1.9 trillion American Rescue Plan Act and sets aside \$350 million intended to support state and local governments.

Flooding fallout

In its ongoing attempts to mitigate post-fire flooding in the Museum Fire area, Coconino County received two different \$3.5 million influxes of funding in the span of a week in November. First, Forest Service Chief Randy Moore announced the agency would provide funding for several flood mitigation projects below the burn scar. The announcement came after Moore and several other federal officials toured the Museum Fire burn area along with local county and city officials and Rep. Tom O'Halleran. Then, the Natural Resources Conservation Service approved the Coconino County Flood Control District's request for federal aid to help restore the Spruce Watershed and construct flood mitigation infrastructure below the Museum Fire burn scar. The

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

money will allow the district to build infrastructure in several areas of private property, largely in the area of the Elden Estates neighborhood, as well as one section of property owned by the City of Flagstaff.

Canyon entrance reopens

After almost a year of being closed, the Grand Canyon National Park reopened its east entrance to the South Rim in April. It had been shut down to limit travel and the spread of COVID-19 across the nearby Navajo Nation and other northern Arizona communities. That decision had been long sought by local business leaders and city officials in nearby communities including Page, who have pointed at the closure of the east entrance as one reason local economies are struggling. Page Mayor Bill Diak and Page City Manager **Darren Coldwell** told the Arizona Daily Sun that the closure cut off the city from the largest draw for tourism in the region. With the east entrance closed, tourists were forced to drive a roundabout way through Flagstaff if they wanted to visit Page, Lake Powell or Horseshoe Bend, so many simply opted not to, **Coldwell** said.

Electric vehicles

The City of Flagstaff continued work on its Sustainable Automotive Rebate Program in 2021 to promote sustainable practices in the community and to support the city's vehicle industry. As the rebate program takes its roots in the city and more electric vehicles hit the market, Jack Fitchett, Flagstaff business attraction manager, said dealerships will be supported in their efforts to bring electric vehicle models to consumers. It is one of a few strategies the city has implemented to encourage electric vehicle use. Fitchett said some local automotive dealerships have told the city they struggle with locals purchasing vehicles at dealerships in other cities, whether that's due to lower prices, tax incentives or a greater selection of fuel-efficient vehicles. The Sustainable Automotive Tax Rebate program looks to provide a level of support for these dealerships.

Great American Outdoors Act

Arizona projects got \$110 million last year and will get another \$159 million in the fiscal year that started in October, or more than 9% of all funding nationally under the Great American Outdoors Act for those two years. The money, dedicated largely to national parks but also to federal lands and tribal schools, has been welcomed by tourism and environmental groups, who said it is long overdue. For national parks, the backlog of deferred maintenance totaled \$11.9 billion in 2018, according to data from the National Park Service. More than \$507.4 million of that was for projects in Arizona, with \$313.8 million needed in the Grand Canyon National Park alone.

A boost to the arts

Rep. Tom O'Halleran announced in September that several entertainment venues across northern Arizona, many of which have struggled as COVID-19 forced events to be canceled, would be receiving federal aid through Shuttered Venue Operators Grants. "As a lifelong lover of music, I know that live performance and art have the power to heal, to bring us together, and to expand our world view, as well as the power to stimulate the economies of growing states like Arizona. Independent venues were some of the first places to close and the last to open; when we push

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

forward again as a nation, we cannot do so starved of the experiences that bring us together," O'Halleran said in a statement. In terms of Flagstaff organizations that received aid, the Flagstaff Symphony Association got \$19,100. Greenhouse Productions got \$148,917, Hullabaloo Festivals received \$108,099 and Peak Events was given \$208,317. Red & Black Productions received \$52,240 and the Orpheum got \$383,720. Lastly, Theatrikos Theatre Company is receiving \$68,594. Organizations in Page, Tusayan and Sedona also received federal grant money.

Construction projects

In an effort to stimulate a pandemic-stricken northern Arizona economy, the Coconino County Board of Supervisors approved a plan in February to move \$3 million of county projects to construction in the spring. The Public Works Stimulus Plan featured civil capital improvement road projects, almost 7 miles of pavement preservation projects, road maintenance equipment procurement, and crushing and blasting at the county's operated pits to produce road surfacing material. In addition, Public Works secured approval from the Bureau of Indian Affairs to resurface 10 miles of county-maintained school bus routes on the Navajo Nation as part of the stimulus plan.

NAU's impact

Northern Arizona University has long had a significant effect on Flagstaff's economy as a whole, and the university is currently navigating a decline in the number of students who are attending. NAU reported an enrollment loss of 4.2% (or 1,066 fewer students) in fall 2021 compared to the previous fall. Since the fall of 2017, the university's enrollment has decreased 10.8% (or 2,977 students). The report shows undergraduate enrollment increasing at the university from 2012 through 2018, and then declining since 2020. NAU's statistics in the ABOR Fiscal Year 2020 College Completion Report were similar to overall trends for Arizona public universities. The university saw a slight rise in undergraduate degrees, a continuation of its growth since 2010, the earliest data in the report. A total of 6,259 students graduated from NAU with a bachelor's degree in 2020, and 1,489 received a graduate degree. Degrees in health and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) fields had the greatest increase.

State jobless rate

Arizona showed several straight months of decreased jobless rate in the second half of the year as the state tried to shake off the economic effects of the pandemic. Job gains were spread across almost all categories, with the biggest increase in the leisure and hospitality industry that was battered last year by pandemic shutdowns and travel bans. Jobs in that sector grew 17.6% from a year earlier, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The most stark contrast to last year happened as the holiday shopping season began. The Arizona Department of Economic Security said there were 19,067 total jobless claims the week before Thanksgiving, compared to 404,748 in the same week in 2020.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Navajo Times
November 4, 2021

Page-Navajo aid agreement ends

By Krista Allen

An agreement to provide public safety services to Western Navajo ended on Sunday, leaving the large area near Page-Lake Powell vulnerable to potential criminal activity.

Page City Manager **Darren Coldwell** in September sent a letter to Navajo Police Chief Phillip Francisco saying the city would terminate the 2016 Mutual Aid Agreement between the Navajo Nation Police, the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety, and the Page Police Department, if concerns were not addressed. **Coldwell** said neither Francisco nor Tuba City Police District Capt. Leonard Williams and Jesse Delmar, the executive director of Division of Public Safety, reached out to **Coldwell**'s office to resolve issues.

“The (Sept. 8) letter outlined some worries relating to emergency response by the city into Navajo Nation territory and the lack of appropriate agreements for the city response or requests for mutual aid,” **Coldwell** said in a follow-up letter to Francisco last Thursday. **Coldwell** said, “At the conclusion of the (Sept. 8) letter, it was politely requested that a meeting to discuss concerns and potential solutions be considered.” Rather than responding to his office, **Coldwell** said, Francisco talked to the Navajo Times. “The city was very disappointed to see that Chief Francisco chose to speak to the media instead of reaching out to the city directly,” **Coldwell** explained. “The city was further disappointed, and frankly confused, to see that (Francisco) publicly stated that Page resources ‘have rarely, if at all, in the last year or two, come onto Navajo Nation to take calls or assist us,’” he said.

Coldwell wrote in the Oct. 28 follow-up letter that the Page Police Department received 754 public safety calls for Western Navajo, 269 of which are calls within the last 24 months. The Page Fire Department and the EMS responded 910 times since 2016. “Had (Francisco) bothered to reach out and discuss the matter with the city as requested, the city could have shared these statistics and others that highlight the need for a change in the current practices,” **Coldwell** said. He added, “The city truly does not want to see our friends, family members, and neighbors on the Navajo Nation suffer due to lack of emergency response. “Nevertheless, the good people of LeChee, Coppermine and Kaibeto, among other (communities) are exasperated at the lack of public safety response to those areas of the reservation,” he said.

Working with chief, not city manager

Francisco said his police commanders are working with Page Police Chief Tim Lange to resolve issues, not **Coldwell**. Lange, who's Bilagáana, is a former Navajo Police officer. “We have a good working relationship with the chief (Lange),” Francisco said in an interview with the Navajo Times on Wednesday morning. “We'll come to a resolution between the captain (Tuba City District Capt. Williams) – because he's responsible for allocation of manpower and addressing issues in (Western). “And directly with (Lange),” he added. “We also have fire and

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

EMS from the Navajo Nation, and they're talking directly with their counterparts in Page also." Francisco said his team is trying to find a resolution for public safety in Western that works. "I don't think the Mutual Aid Agreement is in place anymore," Francisco said. "They would have to renew it. "But either way, without the agreement, we're still dedicated to protecting the citizens of both sides and co-responding – the police departments on both sides," he said, "to provide emergency services the best we can and work together in that area."

The Oct. 28 letter included a 53-page report of emergency service calls the Page police officers responded to in Western. "The concerns came from the two chiefs (Lange and Page Fire Chief Jeff Reed)," **Coldwell** said in a follow-up interview with the Times on Friday. "Their concern being the limited manpower that they have on their forces."

Coldwell said the Page police and EMS personnel have responded to emergency service calls in Western because if his staff doesn't do it, no one will, placing the city in a precarious moral position, which leaves the city without adequate resources for response. "We discussed it for a quite a while and kind of let it go," **Coldwell**. "With the antiquated mutual aid system that we had, I figured it was time to reach out to see if we could do something that was a little better for both of us. "The response time from the Navajo PD, it can take quite a while," he said. "We're hoping that maybe some of those services can return to the neighbors and we can start off on a fresh foot."

Coldwell said Francisco needs to send resources to Western. "There's an amount of frustration coming from our emergency services," **Coldwell** said in tears. "When we're not getting halfway, after a while you start getting frustrated. "As of Sunday (Oct. 31), our services won't be rendered up to the Navajo Nation any longer," he said. "Trust me, it's kept all of us awake at night, hoping Sunday never came. I hope the people of the Navajo Nation realize it was a very tough decision."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Navajo Times
October 7, 2021

Page threatens to stop responding to police calls from nearby rez

By Krista Allen

Threatening to stop responding to public safety calls in Western Navajo, the Page city manager wrote in a letter to the Navajo Police chief that the city will terminate an agreement made between the two agencies. Page City Manager **Darren Coldwell** last month sent the letter to Navajo Police Chief Phillip Francisco saying the city is terminating the 2016 Mutual Aid Agreement between the Navajo Nation Police, the Navajo Nation Division of Public Safety, and the Page Police Department. The purpose of the agreement is to provide mutual law enforcement personnel and resources in the event of a disaster, disorder, emergencies, or special requests for events in the respective jurisdiction. The agreement went into effect under then Page Police Chief Frank Balkcom Sr.

But **Coldwell** said, “The practical application of that agreement has proven to be unworkable for Page and does not provide adequate protections to the city or its law enforcement officers.” **Coldwell** said the city intends to terminate the mutual aid agreement on Oct. 31 when Page police officers would no longer respond to calls in Western Navajo. “Despite our concerns over the years, the city has responded to life threatening situations in an effort to assist people in need,” **Coldwell** wrote, “but without mutually beneficial modifications to the current circumstances.”

Coldwell said this has been an ongoing issue for years. While there has been some progress with law enforcement, **Coldwell** said the current practices and state of operations are not working for the city. “Currently, both police and emergency medical services personnel from the city are regularly dispatched to respond onto the Navajo Nation,” **Coldwell** wrote. “Historically, in an effort to be a good neighbor, the city has done its best to assist and respond.”

Coldwell said Page police and EMS personnel have responded because if they don’t do it, no one will, placing the city in a precarious moral position, which leaves the city without adequate resources for response. “Although we sincerely desire to be good partners and neighbors, the burden that the historic practice has placed upon the city’s resources is significant and unsustainable,” **Coldwell** said, adding that finite resources are not the only concern with the current practices.

Coldwell said city medical personnel often encounter dangerous circumstances, such as violent crimes, while responding to calls in the Nation. “In these circumstances, the patient either goes untreated or city law enforcement must assist because typically, the Navajo Nation law enforcement is unavailable to respond,” **Coldwell** said.

Navajo Nation Police Chief Phillip Francisco said the Page police officers though don’t quite respond to the calls in the Nation. “Page resources, which are fire and EMS, come out to help,”

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Francisco explained in an interview with the Navajo Times. “They have rarely, if at all, in the last year or two, come onto Navajo to take calls or assist us. “A lot of those were taken by our (Navajo police) officers,” he said. Francisco said the letter was written without research, and if the city of Page and the Page Police withdraw from the agreement, it will hinder the ability to help them. “And that’s what these agreements are really for,” Francisco said. “It’s not for them to come do our job or come out and take calls, or we take calls for them. It’s mutual aid. “If anything major happens ... we want to be able to go out there and provide assistance and more officers to help out, and vice versa,” he said. “That’s what those agreements are for, so we have the coverage and authority to help each other but not do each other’s job.”

Coldwell’s letter says that Page police are regularly dispatched to respond to calls on the Nation. Francisco said that’s untrue, according to Navajo Police’s statistics. “Some of our police calls do get routed through (Page’s) 911 center but they’ll refer to our dispatch and our officers respond,” Francisco explained.

Francisco said while **Coldwell’s** letter is a little hostile, it shows cooperation from **Coldwell**. “From my staff – the police department is cooperative,” he said. “The (Page) Police Chief (Tim Lange) has a good relationship with my commanders. But I think this really came from the city manager without really helping anybody else.” Francisco’s police commanders want to maintain a working relationship with Lange and the Page Police Department.

The letter was copied to Page Police Chief Tim Lange, Page Fire Chief Jeff Reed, Tuba City Police District Capt. Leonard Williams, and to Jesse Delmar, the executive director of Division of Public Safety. Lange and Delmar did not respond to an interview request. **Coldwell** agreed to a follow-up interview but pulled back because of health reasons, said Robin Crowther, **Coldwell’s** executive administrative assistant.

LeChee Chapter has a police substation but it was temporarily closed because some officers had to be reallocated in Dilkon, Arizona. Francisco said the reopening of the substation is underway. There are 21 patrol officers in the Tuba City Police District. Francisco said TCPD rarely gets help from Page Police.

“Although the city is terminating the 2016 Mutual Aid Agreement, I’m requesting a meeting between our organizations to craft solutions for all interested parties,” **Coldwell** said. “I am optimistic that we can work together and find ways to provide needed services to the residents of both the city and the Navajo Nation,” he said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Arizona Daily Sun, The (Flagstaff, AZ)
April 13, 2021

As eastern Grand Canyon Park entrance reopens, Page leaders breath a sigh of relief

Author: Adrian Skabelund

For the first time in just over a year, tour buses sat outside hotels in Page this weekend. Page City Manager **Darren Coldwell** told the Arizona Daily Sun he thinks that has a lot to do with a decision by Grand Canyon National Park last week. On Thursday, the Grand Canyon National Park reopened its eastern entrance to the South Rim of the park. That entrance had been closed since April 2020 as a measure to limit travel and the spread of COVID-19 across the nearby Navajo Nation and other northern Arizona communities. But with vaccination efforts in full swing across Arizona and on tribal lands, Park Superintendent Ed Keable made the decision to reopen the east entrance.

In a media release, Keable said he made the decision after consulting with both Navajo Nation leaders and the nearby Cameron Chapter. Previously, park officials had said the entrance wouldn't reopen until May. "As vaccine rollouts continue, we recognize the need to normalize our operations and allow for visitors to have a drive-thru option on Hwy 64," Keable said in a statement. That decision had been long sought by local business leaders and city officials in nearby communities including Page, who have pointed at the closure of the east entrance as one reason local economies are struggling.

Page Mayor Bill Diak and **Coldwell** told the Arizona Daily Sun last month that the closure cut off the city from the largest draw for tourism in the region. With the east entrance closed, tourists were forced to drive a roundabout way through Flagstaff if they wanted to visit Page, Lake Powell or Horseshoe Bend, so many simply opted not to, **Coldwell** said.

Page officials had been pressuring elected leaders and Keable to reopen the east entrance. "It's really good news for the city of Page. It has already made a difference, believe it or not. Our numbers at Horseshoe Bend increased drastically over the weekend," **Coldwell** said. "Foot traffic in town has increased. So, you know, I think we're going see some of those weekend people that we weren't seeing before." **Coldwell** said he believes several significant factors played a role in Keable's decision.

On March 31, the Navajo Nation Council voted to reopen tribal roads on the Navajo reservation to tourists and other visitors. That resolution was vetoed by Nation President Jonathan Nez, who cited the danger posed by new strains of the virus as a reason roads should remain closed. But **Coldwell** said he thinks the message carried by the council's vote was significant. Additionally, **Coldwell** said the Cameron Chapter supported the reopening of the entrance.

Last month, Gov. Doug Ducey also significantly pulled back on COVID-19 related restrictions, ending municipal mask mandates and eliminating occupancy limits for business. "I think [park officials] saw with Gov. Ducey dropping his restrictions and opening up the state, I think that

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

they realized that they were maybe a little bit behind the times for Arizona," **Coldwell** said. Mask wearing is required at all locations on the Navajo Nation. And not everything is back to normal at the park's east entrance. No services -- including food, gas, and the campground -- will be available at Desert View until further notice as staffing at the park is still a challenge. The nearest services available to Desert View are in Cameron, about 30 miles east of the Desert View developed area. Other services are currently available on the South Rim in Grand Canyon Village. Credit cards, Your Pass Now, and America the Beautiful passes will be accepted for entry. Cash will not be accepted at this time.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Associated Press State Wire: Arizona (AZ)
March 18, 2021

Push on for reopening of the Grand Canyon's east entrance

Author: Daily Sun Staff

Grand Canyon National Park officials tentatively plan to reopen the park's eastern entrance in late May, but there's sentiment in a small northern Arizona city that depends on tourism that sooner would be better. "Our sales tax for this year is down nearly 30% from last year," Page city manager **Darren Coldwell** told the Arizona Daily Sun. "Our Horseshoe Bend visitation is down 80%. So when we say that our numbers dropped off the face of the earth, they really did."

The Grand Canyon's eastern entrance and the highway leading to it, State Route 64, were closed last spring as a courtesy to the neighboring Navajo Nation, which was hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic. The tribe's vast reservation in the Four Corners region has reported nearly 30,000 confirmed COVID-19 cases with 1,219 deaths as of Tuesday, when only two new cases and one additional death were reported.

A nightly curfew to help curb spread of the coronavirus remains in effect on the reservation but slowing of the outbreak has prompted the Navajo Nation to begin a partial reopening of some businesses and other facilities. Two of the tribe's four casinos will reopen Friday. Navajo Nation roads remain closed to visitors, but the Navajo Nation Council is considering a bill to rescind those closures — which don't affect the highway into the park.

Meanwhile, Page Mayor Bill Diak worries the highway's continued closure will do lasting damage to the city's economy and small businesses. For years, Diak said Page has marketed itself as part of a loop route for tourists visiting national parks and monuments in the Southwest. But with State Route 64 closed, the loop route has been disrupted. "People come out of Vegas, and they come in one way through I-40, and do the South Rim of the Grand Canyon, continue on up to do Page, Lake Powell, or they go on over to Monument Valley, come back in the other way," Diak said. "Both Utah and Arizona have marketed that for years, and then finally it has taken hold over the last three years. Now we're going to lose all that. For now, many campsites at the Page-Lake Powell Campground sit empty.

"Starting from spring break in March, for the last five or six years, our campground has been sold out every single weekend all the way into Thanksgiving," said Ron Colby, who manages the campground and a nearby bait shop. Colby said business has been down 78% compared to 2019. There were a few weeks last summer that approached normal occupancy levels, but that eventually dropped off. Diak and **Coldwell**, the city manager, have been lobbying park officials to reopen the highway.

Park spokesperson Joelle Baird said Superintendent Edward Keable is considering reopening the eastern entrance on May 21, before Memorial Day weekend. Baird said the final decision will be made only after careful consideration and consultations with tribal leaders. Other factors that

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

must be weighed include park staffing needed to reopen the entrance and the possibility of changes in the pandemic, Baird said. The stretch of State Route 64 through the Navajo Nation outside of the park is a popular spot for roadside vendors trying to capitalize on tourist traffic, but those services remain prohibited by the tribe's public health orders. Jared Touchin, a spokesman for tribal President Jonathan Nez, said those restrictions could be revisited soon if the number of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations and deaths on the reservation continue to drop.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Lake Powell Chronicle
September 16, 2020

Substance Abuse Task Force appointed

By Bob Hembree

The Page City Council took further actions to help ensure success for the Substance Abuse Task Force. Previously, the board was limited to five members. Following city staff recommendation, council amended the code, increasing the task force to seven members.

Page City Manager **Darren Coldwell**, referring to the Aug. 6 meeting between the City, Chamber, health professionals and the Navajo Nation, said, “We actually had more than expected participation.” **Coldwell** informed the council that Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez requested representation on the task force. **Coldwell** said “[There’re] a lot of resources out there that might be left on the table if we didn’t give them an opportunity to participate. It’s such a rarity that we get a chance where people want to step up and help. Why say no. They were all great candidates.”

Councilor Rick Yanke voiced concerns about the increased size, citing poor attendance at city board meetings, often not meeting the number required for a quorum. City Attorney Josh Smith, who was also instrumental in bringing the task force back to life, said, “I think [with] this board now, they definitely have a purpose and a lot of buy-in, so hopefully we can keep that going.”

Councilor Dennis Warner was active in the early stages of solving the city’s problem. He supported the change and said, “In the meetings that I’ve attended, I think that this has the potential to be an extremely powerful resource to approach this problem. These representatives, for the most part, are associated with organizations that are in that world that deal with this and can help us deal with the problem “These are people that represent organizations that have impact and decision-making authority to move this thing forward.”

Councilor David Auge, who attended the Aug. 6 meeting, said, “They’re also several who are in the trenches day in and day out so have a lot of buy-in.” After amending the code to allow seven members, council approved seven applicants, and encouraged others to stay involved. The new task force is well-rounded.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Lake Powell Chronicle
September 5, 2020

Help for the Homeless, Stranded and Addicted
'The problem the City of Page faces is a daunting one'
Bob Hembree

Page summers and winters are brutal for the homeless and stranded, sometimes deadly. Couple extreme weather with alcohol, the danger increases. Page Chief of Police, Drew Sanders said there were four deaths this summer exhibiting signs of alcohol poisoning, overexposure to heat or both, including a 50-year-old man found in the Page City Park July 20, and a 43-year-old man found in the desert July 26 near U.S. Route 89.

Sanders said helping people get medical treatment or to the emergency room, is always an ongoing concern. Arrests for substance abuse related crimes are routine in downtown Page. Page has tried for decades to solve the downtown problem, and now, vigorous efforts have ramped up again. A task force has formed, and it's got the backing of people and organizations with experience and resources to get it moving. Before the pandemic, meetings were underway with representatives from local medical and mental health professionals, the police department, city officials, and council members. While the regular group meetings were on hold temporarily, it didn't stop discussions and making essential contacts through networking.

Page City Manager **Darren Coldwell** told the Chronicle, “problem the City of Page faces is a daunting one, and one that has been facing the residents and the affected for as long as most can remember.” **Coldwell** said the decision to help was the concern for safety. He said, “It was our fear that with the continued heat we could potentially see an uptick in hospitalizations and even deaths. Those have both come to fruition this summer.”

Coldwell said about 40 percent of all emergency service calls involve intoxicated individuals, “We have seen three deaths in three weeks from alcohol poisoning and exposure.” The Page Fire Department and Emergency Medical Services reported 338 calls for intoxicated individuals over the last six months. Page Hospital said 231 ethanol and alcohol patients were admitted to the emergency room in the last three months. Police, fire, courts and medical services see the same people week after week, month after month. Over 80 percent of court prosecuted cases involve alcohol. Encompass estimates they serve between 1,000 and 2,000 patients annually.

Sander's presentation on the subject said arrests only add debt to poverty. “It's not solution-based. No solution plan will be complete without robust treatment plans.”

So, what is being done?

Coldwell said, “It was the decision of city staff to attempt to make a difference in the problem, be it successful or not we were going to at least try. With myself, (Page City Attorney) Josh Smith, (Police) Chief Sanders, Chief (Jeff) Reed, (Community Development Director) Tim Suan, (Economic Development Coordinator) Gregg Martinez, and direction from Mayor (Levi) Tappan

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

we decided to re-establish the Substance Abuse Committee. With this core group we then decided to extend invitations to Banner Health, Coconino County, Canyon Lands, Encompass, Page Unified School District, Catholic Charities, and the Navajo Nation.”

A significant step forward grew from a group teleconference. Gregg Martinez spoke with Sandra Flores, Sr. Programs Director for Catholic Charities. From there, concrete plans began. Catholic Charities was granted funds through the CARES Act. This put them in a better position to extend a helping hand to Page. **Coldwell** and Sanders welcomed them with open arms. The city is providing Catholic Charities office space and utilities. This will give their two employees assigned to Page a place to work from near the city park. Sanders told the Chronicle, "It's not a silver bullet. We've got to have treatment options. We can't arrest our way out of the problem."

Coldwell said, “Catholic Charities will play a very important part in the outreach to those that are most affected. They will be seen daily working directly with the individuals affected. They will offer food, water, a ride home or even short-term hotel rooms to get them out of the extreme weather our area faces daily. They will be working directly with Encompass to get them the necessary help and hopefully long-term care.” Short-term care is available, but **Coldwell** said long-term care is something Page has never had. He’s working to make this happen with the help of Encompass and Catholic Charities and he’s pursuing permanent funding through the Governor’s Office. **Coldwell** said, “Currently we have had verbal commitments from all of those to help, we now are in the process of providing the documentation needed to be eligible for the funding.”

What makes this latest attempt to solve the problem different?

Page City Council committed \$25,000 to get it started. The driving force is **Coldwell** and team. They’ve managed to gather influential leaders together to discuss and join forces. An historic meeting took place at city hall Aug. 6. It was a mix of face to face in the council chambers and video conferencing. **Coldwell** led the meeting that included Navajo Nation President Jonathan Nez, Arizona Rep. Arlando Teller, Coconino County District 5 Supervisor Lena Fowler, Encompass CEO Joe Wright, and representatives from Banner Health, CareFirst, Catholic Charities, Page Lake Powell Chamber of Commerce, Health Choice Arizona, and Navajo Nation Division of Behavioral and Mental Health Services. Page is also introducing a drug court to Page. **Coldwell** said, “The court will include a combination of probation, mental health, substance abuse counseling, and social services to make a long-term commitment to the addicted individual. The goal of the court is continuous treatment for individuals who need it. We are hoping this will end the never-ending revolving door that the court currently sees. This is a model that has been used very successfully in other communities such as ours.”

Coldwell said, “I do want to mention Rep. Teller and the commitment he has made to the success of this endeavor. It is because of him that the Navajo Nation, led by President Nez, has decided to come to the table. I can’t stress the importance of the working relationship that is needed in order for this to succeed. For President Nez and his staff to attend the initial informational meeting was of the utmost importance to begin to solve this problem.”

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Teller said, “Our people, our constituents, our families. our friends, some people we know personally are in our streets and may feel like there is no other way to get out of the situation that they’re in.” Teller continued, “With this group of folks, professionals, we can do something today, if not continually, in addressing not only this homelessness issue and the substance abuse issue and the resources that we are all limited by, we can work together in addressing this as a team, as a coalition.” Teller offered to work with stakeholders to address drafting appropriation funding for legislation. This includes collecting data and evaluating past efforts to learn where improvements can be made.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Lake Powell Chronicle
July 11, 2020

Mayor Tappan: New Industry, Mask Mandate, and the Facebook Post
Bob Hembree

Author’s note: This story was written Monday, July 5. On Tuesday, July 6, Mayor Tappan rescinded the Page City’s Council’s face-covering mandate, replacing it with an emergency proclamation. A 2/3 majority is sufficient to pass the mandate, however, it would take 30 days before it would go into effect. State law requires a ¾ supermajority for an emergency order to go into effect immediately. The council vote was 5-2 in favor. The mayor’s emergency order enabled the city to mandate face-coverings in indoor public spaces and businesses immediately. The penalty for noncompliance is not to exceed \$50.

Mayor Levi Tappan spoke with the Chronicle Monday. The interview touched on three topics: new industry, the mask mandate, and his Facebook post that led to national media attention. All three topics focus on the search for solutions to problems.

New Industry

When this reporter interviewed **Darren Coldwell** shortly after he was chosen as Page City Manager, the conversation focused on creating new industry in Page. **Coldwell** cited examples from his time as a Mayor and a County Administrator in Montana. His idea was to diversify Page’s income streams, to strengthen the economic base with micro industries. He said businesses could develop from within rather than from outside the community. These could range between 30 and 40 employees in size.

The current pandemic highlights the pitfalls of reliance on a single industry. It also suggests the business of tourism could change dramatically for years to come. While some will adapt, finding creative ways to reinvent their businesses and stay solvent, others won’t. In order for a city to continue to provide public services, there must be a supporting tax base. This points to developing new industries in Page with markets beyond its borders, ideally recession and pandemic proof. Mayor Tappan said the city is, “looking at ways to help small mom and pop businesses get started in Page, like small manufacturing, kind of like Yamamoto. We’re focusing on our industrial park to get small manufacturing and things like that.” In another example, Tappan said, “The airport has a lot of office space upstairs, but it’s not ADA compliant until we get an elevator. We’re working on getting some kind of elevator so we can unlock all the office space and use the airport as kind of an incubator space.” 'Incubator space' is a term used to describe facilities for startup companies trying new ideas. This could include software development, online services, or completely new innovations. Tappan, looking at the potential of the airport, adds, “We want to get more people flying into it, obviously, and also cater to private planes as a stopover. They can stop in and get lunch in Page, then go about their flights.” “We’ve been throwing around a lot of ideas,” said Tappan.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Mask Mandate The mask mandate was brought up by counselor Warren at the June 24 City Council Meeting. Governor Ducey had authorized local governments to enact their own pandemic safety measures on June 17. At that time, only two of the seven council members voiced support for the mandate, Warner and counselor Auge. The following week, after seeing huge spikes in the state, an emergency meeting was called. The possibility of a mask mandate was still alive. This time, only two voted against it, counselor Lee and counselor Davis. Vice Mayor Kocjan and counselor Yank both changed their views and supported the mandate. Tappan, who seemed on the fence at the June 24 meeting, cast the deciding vote needed to pass the order. The Chronicle asked Tappan, “What changed?” He said, “I started getting a lot more feedback, emails. About 75 percent wanted masks and 25 percent were against it.” “Kocjan said something that really struck me: if this can save once life, it’s worth a little inconvenience.”

Kocjan, in the emergency meeting, said a statement from the Whitehouse helped change his mind about the mask mandate. He said, “This thing’s been debated all over the world. The white house has changed, and like they said yesterday at the white house, that if it saves one person’s life it’s worth doing the right thing for your fellow man.” Tappan said, “I heard arguments on both sides, and the majority of the public wanted masks. So, we did it the way that would be the least intrusive.” In regard to renewing the mandate Aug. 1, Tappan said, “We’re following the numbers. We’ll do what the data says.”

The Chronicle asked if he received pressure from fellow employees at Banner Hospital. He said most are pretty good about not pressuring him one way or the other, though a few have cornered him. Tappan said, “Even in the hospital, health care employees are opposed. Most want masks, some of them don’t. There’s not a consensus within the hospital.”

The Facebook comment about Navajo Nation President Nez

Page residents are familiar with the groups of seemingly homeless people who congregate in the parks and the breezeway on block 17, the center of town. Police and emergency medical staff are called frequently, either because of intoxication, fighting or someone passed out on the sidewalk. They’re arrested or taken to the emergency room, then released. The arrest cycle repeats, most often with the same offenders. It’s been a concern for the city and local businesses for many years. Hospitals, public safety officials, and city representatives have met and discussed solutions. They were having regular meetings and developing plans of action. Then came COVID-19. It is in this context that Mayor Tappan made a one-sentence comment on Facebook, one which received national media attention in early May: "I wish he would battle alcoholism as hard as COVID19." The comment included a photo of a small group of people gathered in the breezeway of block 17. This, along with the intoxication, ambulances, and police responses, is a familiar scene for businesses in the area, including the Chronicle with its main entrance located on the same breezeway.

The Chronicle asked Mayor Tappan to provide his own context for his comment, which some interpreted as having racist underpinnings. He said, “My first state of the city address, I said we need to work on substance abuse in town, and we need to do it without pointing fingers and calling names at each other -- because I knew that would happen and that is exactly what

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

happened.” Tappan said, “People that live in Page know that there’s a problem we need to work on. I tried to explain the context on that post, but no one wants to listen to facts anymore,” adding, “Alcohol kills one in ten people on the reservations. It’s much higher than COVID. And the only way we’re going to solve this is working together because President Nez closing down the reservation is causing more problems for border towns.”

When asked if he’d had any interactions with President Nez recently, Tappan said, “Two weeks before that comment I had emailed him and mailed him letters trying to work with him and we’ve never heard from him. We’ve never gotten a response from him.” Tappan said, “I talked with several of the tour companies, and they say they can’t get a response from him either. So, I’m guessing Facebook is the way to get ahold of President Nez.” The comment did get the attention of President Nez. He wrote a widely published response to the mayor’s comment. It essentially asked for the same cooperation Tappan said he’d been asking for in solving the substance abuse problem. Tappan, looking at the positive side of the incident, said, “So, I started the conversation. Eyes are opened. Kaibito Mental Health has contacted us. They have resources and want to help us out, partner with us. There’ll be a lot of good that comes from this.”

Liquor sales, mental health, and drug court

The mayor outlined the city’s approach to solving the problem. “We want to cover it from three angles. One is the supply side. We want to cut off the supply side. So, if they know that can’t get it, they’ll stop coming. We’ve had great success. Styx Liquor is reporting great success on that. We want to help educate the clerks. It’s actually illegal to serve inebriated people. “We also want to work on the mental health side. Catholic Charities is coming in, and Lake Powell Medical Center. “The third side, I think we’re going to get it this year, is setting up a drug court. So, we’re putting more in the budget for the court side so it’s not just a revolving door. We’re actually helping them find the help they need.”

Tappan says this will happen in the municipal court with the help of the county for services. In addition to city and county involvement, he said, “Catholic Charities is doing fieldwork, hanging out in our parks to find out what people need.” The city of Page is providing office space and utilities for Catholic Charities to work from. Tappan, referring to his 2018 campaign promise, ended the interview with, “And we’re still working on a pool.”

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Associated Press State Wire: Arizona (AZ)
April 18, 2020

Arizona cities retrenching to cope with coronavirus outbreak

Author: The Associated Press

Arizona cities are tightening their belts and revising previously rosy budget forecasts as the coronavirus outbreak's financial impact takes hold in metropolitan areas and mostly rural counties alike. Steps already being implemented or under consideration include freezing hiring, putting projects on hold and foregoing planned equipment purchases. Cities laying off or furloughing workers include at last two Phoenix suburbs and Page in northern Arizona.

State budget analysts project significant drops in tax revenue, including sales tax collections that are a major source of funding for cities. Meanwhile, fuel taxes that help pay for transportation projects also will be reduced as Arizonans drive fewer miles. "We don't know how much yet, but we are going to see a reduction of state-shared revenues," Colleen Haines, Kingman public affairs coordinator, told the Kingman Miner. "We are going to see a reduction in our budget. Those are the facts." Kingman is delaying the planned purchase of a new \$1 million fire truck and putting off building remodeling projects. Phoenix now faces a projected \$26 million shortfall instead of a \$28 million surplus. "And that's after accounting for spending reductions and a hiring freeze instituted on March 19," City Manager Ed Zuercher said.

Additional options being considered include selling surplus land, not replacing aging vehicles and trimming payments to the pension fund for city workers, azfamily.com reported. "I believe we have even more difficult decisions in front of us," Mayor Kate Gallego said during Monday's City Council meeting. Zuercher has asked each department to list cuts adding up to 25% in case they're needed, Gallego noted. "We are trying to tighten our belts along with everyone."

Prescott officials also are redrawing their revenue forecasts and spending plans, The Daily Courier reported. "We are definitely in the middle of a recession now, with these jobless rates," said city Budget and Finance Director Mark Woodfill. Prescott has already frozen many expenditures and vacancies while halting employee travel for both cost and health reasons. Woodfill plans to present the City Council with a revised budget proposal with "a lot of contingencies," and he suggested leaving open the possibility of a property tax increase. Publishing a notice of intent wouldn't require the council to take the step, he said, but it would leave the option open until June when a final decision would have to be made and more is known about the economy.

The economy has already cost hundreds of municipal workers their jobs, at least temporarily, as Mesa and Tempe close facilities and shut down programs, the Arizona Republic reported. Tempe on Monday furloughed 495 temporary employees, most of whom work for departments that operate the library, arts and culture facilities, community centers, recreation programs and volunteer services. "This was a heartbreaking decision because our part-time, temporary employees are the face of Tempe for many people in our community," City Manager Andrew

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Ching said. Tempe anticipates having to make other budget cuts as restaurants scale back operations and other businesses close temporarily, reducing sales tax revenue. Mesa is laying off 23 full-time workers and 455 part-time employees and not filling 35 vacant positions as it shuttered libraries, parks and recreation facilities and arts center.

City Manager Chris Brady recommended that Mesa keep the facilities closed until October for both cost and health reasons, but some City Council members said they'd like to open the doors again earlier if possible. "The impact will kill the downtown area to go much beyond the summer," Councilwoman Jen Duff said of the closures,, the Republic reported.

Page laid off 25 of the city's 175 employees as officials said they expect revenues to drop 33% due to lost sales tax, the Arizona Daily Sun reported. The layoffs were focused on several parts of city government, including the public works department, summer recreation programs, the library and the parking operation at Horseshoe Bend, a sightseeing area along the Colorado River. Page's revenue depends heavily on people visiting Horseshoe Bend, Lake Powell or national parks in the region, but City Manager **Darren Coldwell** said few such visitors are expected during the pandemic. At most, **Coldwell** said, Page may still see people visiting from within about a 500-mile (805-kilometer) radius, such as families who might be looking to get away for just a few days.

Tucson has frozen hiring for most departments, but City Manager Michael Ortega said furloughs and layoffs would be "the last option," the Arizona Daily Star reported. "We're going to do everything we can to keep us from having those discussions," Ortega told the City Council. Preliminary projections show Tucson's revenue decrease could last through August and plateau through the end of the calendar year before incremental increases restart in 2021, Ortega said. "But keep in mind we would still be below where we started," Ortega said of the city's overall budget.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Arizona Daily Sun, The (Flagstaff, AZ)
April 17, 2020

City of Page lays off employees as sales tax revenues fall

Author: Adrian Skabelund

As projected revenues plummeted, the city of Page laid off about 14% of its municipal staff this week. Page City Manager **Darren Coldwell** said as city officials have been speaking to local business leaders, they now expect revenues to drop about 33% due to lost sales tax. That essentially puts the city back at the level of funding it had in 2015, **Coldwell** added, prior to the growth the city has recently experienced. The layoffs, which equal 25 of the city's 175 employees, essentially eliminated everyone working in the public works department, at Horseshoe Bend, in summer recreation programs and at the Page Public Library. The directors of the four divisions were not let go, but all are now working at the library, **Coldwell** said. That should mean, despite laying off staff, the library will remain in operation. Horseshoe Bend also remains open, although it will no longer be staffed with parking attendants and other workers. **Coldwell** said the city decided to make cuts in those four areas after looking at the budget and determining which departments had been most affected by the crisis.

Making the decision to let employees go was not an easy one **Coldwell** said, although at this time he is hoping they will be able to rehire many of the staff members that were laid off. Every year, **Coldwell** said about 4.5 million tourists pass through the city either to visit Horseshoe Bend or Lake Powell, or simply on their way to one of the surrounding national parks. And many of those tourists are coming from places such as Europe, Asia or the east coast of the United States. But given the fear around the coronavirus and the travel restrictions in place, **Coldwell** said they likely won't see nearly any of those tourists. As a result, the city would see a significant drop in the city's sales tax revenue. **Coldwell** said at most, they may still see people visiting from within about a 500-mile radius such as families who might be looking to get away for just a few days.

Leaders at the city of Flagstaff, which was already looking at a tight budget prior to the crisis, may be faced with similar challenges as the city sees revenues fall. The city council and staff are set to discuss the upcoming city budget later on in April. Robert Maxim, a research associate at the Brookings Institution, said local governments across the state and the nation are likely to experience similar funding gaps because of the economic shutdown caused by the coronavirus. "A lot of cities, and especially those that rely on sales tax, are going to have huge budget holes blown in them, and so it's going to be difficult for municipalities to respond [to the crisis] on their own," Maxim said. "That's where, in my opinion, the federal government needs to be doing more for states and localities." So far, Maxim said the majority of the money the federal government has approved to send local governments is dedicated specifically for coronavirus response. But in Maxim's opinion, more money needs to be sent to help mitigate the effects of all the lost tax revenue caused by the economic shutdown.

**Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)**

[CB&A Note: Only the information relevant to **Darren Coldwell** is listed below.]

The Montanian
January 22, 2019

Fun and games at Libby 2019 Chamber’s fundraiser
By Tracy McNew

Friday, Jan. 11 marked the Libby Chamber of Commerce’s annual award and fundraising banquet. The event was themed “game night,” and a crowd packed the Memorial Center to enjoy not only awards and games, but also a game themed dinner catered by Mandy Bell’s Gracious Table, complete with domino shaped brownies for dessert. Chamber president, Scott Beagle started the evening with a recap of the Chamber’s many activities over the past year, and then introduced the board of directors which includes Kim Peck, Jamie Paulsen, Liz Whalen, Bruce Vincent, LeRoy Thom, Amber Holm, and Alissa Ramirez. The event was emceed by Liz Whalen, and awards were presented by various people during dinner. This year’s winners included:

Lincoln County’s person of the year- **Darren Coldwell**

Most winners gave a short acceptance speech, and the final award for Lincoln County’s person of the year was presented to **Darren Coldwell**’s mother and sister since he was out of town for healthcare reasons during the event. **Coldwell** connected by video conference though, along with his wife Barbie, and despite technical difficulties with sound, a banter ensued between **Coldwell** and award presenter, Mark Peck, that was touching enough to garner a large round of applause and even a standing ovation by some attendees.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Flat Head Beacon
July 11, 2018

Copper, Silver, and Frustration

By Justin Franz

In a warehouse on the edge of Libby, Theodore Montgomery can supply you with just about anything you would ever need to mine copper and silver. Need a hard-rock drill bit? Sure thing. What size do you want? How about hard hats? How many do you need? What about boots, miner's gloves and safety vests? Yes, yes and yes. "We've got everything from toilet paper to jumbo drills," said Montgomery, who runs F&H Mine Supply's Libby warehouse. "If a mine needs it, we can deliver it."

A few years ago, when the Troy Mine was still producing millions of pounds of copper and silver annually, it wasn't uncommon for Montgomery to make two or three deliveries a day out to the mine. But that all came to an end in 2015, when the mine was shuttered due to a drop in demand for copper. Despite the loss of its biggest local customer, there was reason for F&H Mine Supply to keep a warehouse in Lincoln County. Two months after the shutdown, Coeur d'Alene-based Hecla Mining Company announced it was purchasing Revett Mining Company, including the shuttered Troy Mine and the proposed Rock Creek Mine near Noxon. The following year, Hecla expanded its Montana operations again with the acquisition of Mines Management, which had proposed the Montanore Mine project just south of Libby.

Hecla — which has more than a century of experience in operating mines in Alaska, Idaho and Quebec and considerably deeper pockets than the previous owners — promised to fully develop both mines in Lincoln and Sanders counties, two areas stricken with some of the highest unemployment rates in the state. "There was a lot of optimism locally that Hecla was a company with the resources and skills to push both of these proposed mines to the finish line," said Libby City Administrator Jim Hammons. But two years later, that optimism is starting to fade after the state of Montana designated Hecla President and CEO Phillips S. Baker a "bad actor," a move that some locals worry could kill both proposed mines. "I have no problem with strong mining regulations," said Libby native and Lincoln County Commissioner Mark Peck, "but this 'bad actor' designation against Baker goes too far."

After the Troy Mine closed, Montgomery and his colleague Jason Lucas started to reduce their inventory by moving supplies to other F&H warehouses across the region. They also updated their website in an effort to increase online sales. Montgomery and Lucas figured online sales would help the Libby warehouse stay afloat until the Montanore and Rock Creek mines finally opened. The search for copper and silver underneath the Cabinet Mountain Wilderness began in the early 1980s, when U.S. Borax acquired old mine claims there. A few years later, Canadian-based Noranda Minerals Corp. purchased the Montanore Mine claims and started constructing a 14,000-foot exploratory mine shaft — also known as an adit — 16 miles south of Libby, just outside of the wilderness boundaries. At about the same time, Asarco — which had opened the Troy Mine in 1981 — began work on the proposed Rock Creek Mine project near Noxon in

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches **Darren Newell Coldwell** *(Articles are in reverse chronological order)*

Sanders County (about 40 miles south of Troy). Both projects were put on hold in the early 1990s after a drop in demand for copper, which also shut down the Troy Mine from 1993 to 2005. But that pause turned out to be short-lived. In 1999, the Sterling Mining Company, which later became Revett, purchased the Troy Mine and the Rock Creek project and restarted the permitting process. In 2005, Spokane-based Mines Management acquired the Montanore project and started the same permitting process south of Libby. Taken together, both Montanore and Rock Creek have the potential to produce more than 500 million ounces of silver and 4 billion pounds of copper in their lifetime. The two deposits are separated by about 7,000 feet of earth and a fault line, suggesting that at one time it was actually one ore body. Many consider the combined deposit beneath the Cabinet Mountains to be one of the largest untapped copper and silver resources on Earth. If opened, each mine would likely employ hundreds of people, a potential boon to the local economy. In May, Lincoln County's unemployment rate was at 6.6 percent, far above the state average.

For generations, Lincoln County's economy was propped up by logging and mining, but the 1990s and 2000s brought hard times. In 1990, the W.R. Grace & Co. vermiculite mine closed north of Libby. In 1993, Asarco Mining closed the Troy Mine. That same year, Champion International sold its Libby operations to Stimson Lumber Company, which closed all but one of the mills. The downsizing left more than 800 workers unemployed. The one remaining lumber mill limped on for another decade, before closing in 2003. At about the same time, it was discovered that asbestos contained in the vermiculite mined by W.R. Grace had sickened thousands of people in the community. Libby and the surrounding area was designated a Superfund site by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, kicking off one of the largest environmental cleanups in American history, but also creating a stigma that has stuck with the town ever since.

Darren Coldwell has owned a sporting good store, been mayor of Troy and is currently the Lincoln County administrator. He's had a front row seat to the community's decline over the past few decades. He said that the 1993 closing of the Troy Mine took the "life" out of the little town just a few miles east of the Idaho border, and in some ways it's never fully recovered. "There are just no working-class jobs here anymore," **Coldwell** said. "If you're an 18-year-old who does not want to go to college or join the military, there is really nothing to do for work here."

With the arrival of Hecla in 2015, some locals believed that Lincoln County's luck was finally starting to turn. Since then, the company has continued to work to get approval from a number of state and federal agencies to begin extensive exploration work to get a firm idea of just how much copper and silver is beneath the Cabinet Mountains and set the stage for the eventual opening of both mines. Most recently, in November 2017, the U.S. Forest Service announced it would likely give Hecla approval to begin exploration at Rock Creek sometime this year in a final record of decision on the project. But Rock Creek and Montanore are not without their opponents. A number of environmental groups — including Clark Fork Coalition, Earthworks, Montana Environmental Information Center, Rock Creek Alliance and Save Our Cabinets — have all come out against the project over concerns that the mines would drain and pollute mountain streams and harm the local grizzly bear population.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The environmental groups were also among the first to raise concerns about Hecla President and CEO Phillips S. Baker, who prior to working for the Idaho company was a vice president at Pegasus Gold. Pegasus went bankrupt in 1998, leaving the state of Montana with a \$32 million cleanup bill at a gold mine in the Little Rocky Mountains of north-central Montana. The state also spends about \$2 million annually for water-treatment systems at the site. In March, the Montana Department of Environmental Quality announced that Baker had been designated a “bad actor” and would not be able to engage in mining until he reimbursed the state for the gold mine cleanup. Environmental groups praised the decision. “Montanans have spent decades and millions of dollars cleaning up rivers and streams contaminated by irresponsible mining, and the work is far from over,” said Karen Knudsen, executive director of the Clark Fork Coalition. “The ‘bad actor’ law simply requires full responsibility from mining executives for their previous messes. In the case of Pegasus, it’s long past time these polluters are held accountable.” The bad actor law, passed in 1989, is meant to hold those who fail to clean up polluted mine sites responsible. Since then, it has only been used once, according to Kristi Ponozzo, public policy director of DEQ. Ponozzo is quick to note that only Baker has been designated a bad actor and that no action has been taken against Hecla. However, as long as Baker is at the helm of the company, it cannot pursue mining projects in the state.

Luke Russell, vice president of external affairs for Hecla, said the state’s interpretation of the bad actor law is “wrong” and that Baker is innocent of any wrongdoing. Baker has said in previous interviews that he was not a principal at Pegasus and that “decisions affecting the reclamation, including the bankruptcy settlement and the decision to cease mining operations at Zortman (gold mine)” were made after his departure from the company in early 1998. Hecla has sued the state in an effort to remove the bad actor label from its CEO. The ongoing lawsuit between Hecla and Montana adds a layer of “uncertainty” for the future of the Montanore and Rock Creek projects, Russell said, although he is optimistic that the company will eventually prevail. But locals in Lincoln County are less optimistic, viewing the recent turn of events as yet another example of the area’s long history of bad luck. Montgomery said he was not surprised that state officials in Helena decided to designate Baker a bad actor, in part, because as he sees it, the state has never supported Montanore or Rock Creek. “I have no idea why the state is against these mining projects,” he said. “It seems to me they would have so much to gain if the mines opened. There would be more jobs and more taxes.” Montgomery said he’s worried that eventually F&H Mine Supply will decide it’s not worth waiting for the mines to open and close the Libby warehouse.

Just down U.S. Highway 2, LeRoy Thom, owner of Montana Machine and Fabrication, is also frustrated with the bad-actor designation. Before the Troy Mine shutdown, repairing pieces of mine equipment made up a sizeable chunk of Thom’s business. “It’s like every time they get over one set of hurdles with these mines, they face another set of hurdles,” he said. “It’s never ending.” Thom, who before opening his machine shop worked at the W.R. Grace vermiculite mine, said it’s particularly frustrating because the world needs copper and silver for everything from smartphones to buildings. He said if it’s not mined in the United States, it will be mined in other countries. “Unless the state of Montana gets behind these projects, I don’t think they’ll ever open,” he said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Coldwell, the county administrator, said in recent months local officials have gotten more vocal about supporting Hecla by writing letters to state officials and even traveling to Washington, D.C. to make their pitch directly to federal agencies about the importance of the projects. “I think everyone is starting to see that if we want to save our community, we need to band together and be vocal about it,” he said. “I think we’ve seen how low we can go, and now it’s time to start digging ourselves out of this pit.”

Coldwell said he understands the dangers of having an economy so dependent on one industry and that mining is an especially cyclical business. However, as he sees it, having two mines supporting hundreds of jobs in the community would help “rebuild” the local economy and hopefully attract other businesses. “Success breeds success,” he said.

Not only would opening the two mines help rebuild the area economy, locals say, but it would also help Lincoln County rebuild its reputation into one that’s not centered around the stigma of being home to one of the largest Superfund fund sites in the country. Peck, the county commissioner, said he supports strong mining regulations to protect workers and the environment. However, he believes Hecla can mine copper and silver responsibly. “If any community should be hyper-sensitive to what bad mining practices can do, it’s this community,” he said. “We’ve been living with the consequences (of W.R. Grace) for more than 20 years, but does that mean we should never mine in this community again?”

Thom has a sign that proclaims “I Support Hecla” outside of his machine shop just south of Libby. It’s one of many signs you’ll spot around Libby and Lincoln County supporting the development of the Rock Creek and Montanore mines. “The idea is to learn from the mistakes of the past and make sure it’s done right in the future,” Thom said. “Hecla has a good track record and I don’t think they’re going to cut corners ... I think they can do it the right way.”

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Denver Post, The (CO)
September 17, 2017

Crucial area posts remain vacant - Openings range from the EPA to criminal justice

Author: Jesse Paul and Mark K. Matthews

Eight months into the Trump administration, a slate of top federal jobs in Colorado and the West remains unfilled -- a hiring delay that touches everything from the environment to criminal justice and one which local leaders and activists said hampers their ability to work with the White House. Full-time administrators have yet to be installed in the Colorado regional offices of the Environmental Protection Agency, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Department of Housing and Urban Development and Department of Health and Human Services, among others. The state also has an acting U.S. attorney and a vacant seat on the federal bench. A jurist nominated in June to replace U.S. Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch on the 10th U.S. District Court of Appeals only recently was given the green light to appear before a U.S. Senate panel for vetting. The slow pace hasn't gone unnoticed by either Democrats or Republicans, though the two sides often disagree on its primary cause -- the White House or Congress.

Research by CNN and the Partnership for Public Service, a nonpartisan good-government group, indicates that Trump has fallen far behind predecessors Barack Obama and George W. Bush in nominating federal officials and getting them confirmed. "We certainly have noticed it, but our hope is that they are going to fill those slots quickly and we're beginning to see some motion there," said Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper, who added that the biggest impact was on government-to-government communication. "When you have things that need (an) explanation or a decision ... sometimes you have to wait," said Hickenlooper, a Democrat. "If you don't have the people on the ground, it's often hard to get that information or those decisions as quickly as sometimes you'd like." Asked about their progress, White House officials couldn't put an exact figure on the number of open federal jobs in Colorado or what the government calls Region 8, which includes Colorado and several nearby states. One member of a committee tasked with vetting local candidates said the panel had forwarded dozens of names to the administration since January. "We've tried to weigh in on the key positions that either can have a significant impact on Region 8 or the key positions where we were able to identify somebody who we thought could really make a difference," said Robert Blaha, who chaired Trump's Colorado campaign and is part of that vetting panel. He blamed the hiring delay on several factors, from the slow pace of the Senate to the time needed to conduct in-depth background checks. "I'd be a liar if I said the entire process isn't a bottleneck," Blaha said. As for the administration's own responsibility, Blaha suggested it could do more. "I don't know everything that's going on inside the White House, but I will tell you that I think it's time to pick up the pace," he said. "Anything the White House can do to encourage legislation ... to accelerate it, that's a possibility. To look at temporary assignments, that's a possibility." Also something to consider, Blaha added: Trump may not want to fill every position, in an effort to reduce the size of government.

According to a census of federal workers published after the election, there are about 9,000 federal jobs in which Trump could install his own people, although more than half of those

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

positions don't often change when a new president takes office, putting the figure closer to 4,000. But the turnover does have an impact, even if the basic function of government continues. "Without permanent leadership in place, these regional offices lack clear direction, are unable to develop new partnerships and can be forced to delay things like processing permit applications, grant requests and more," U.S. Rep. Ed Perlmutter, D-Arizona, said in a statement. One notable vacancy is the Denver-based EPA spot for Region 8, which covers Colorado, Montana, the Dakotas, Utah, Wyoming and 27 Tribal Nations.

Former Regional Administrator Shaun McGrath, who oversaw the Gold King Mine spill response, left in January. Since then, Deb Thomas has been filling his job in the interim. Several names recently were floated for the job, including Patrick Davis, who served as Colorado state director during Trump's 2016 campaign, and Doug Benevento, recently a Douglas County School Board member. Joni Teter, who retired three years ago after 25 years at the EPA, said an office can do routine work without a full-time leader but can't move forward on bigger items. "But when we get to the point where there are decisions to be made, whether that is decisions about a phase at a particular Superfund site or a permit or an enforcement action, that doesn't happen without an appointed person," said Teter, who pioneered Save EPA in response to the Trump administration's policies. The oil and gas industry isn't happy either - though for a different reason.

"What we are seeing is that Region 8 is acting like the election never took place," Kathleen Sgamma, president of the Western Energy Alliance, said about the local EPA office. She didn't cite specifics in Colorado -- other than an issue dealing with air regulations -- but Sgamma said she sees the "need for adult supervision in Region 8." The Department of Housing and Urban Development declined to comment about its search for a new regional administrator. But advocates for the homeless said filling the job is essential. "That role serves as the liaison for us and Washington, D.C., and in these incredibly uncertain times, we need to have a local contact that can provide policy and program guidance," said Cathy Alderman of the Colorado Coalition for the Homeless. "It would be much more comforting to know that there was a leader on the ground that would be available to help us navigate and plan for any potential budget cuts."

Similar concerns surround the U.S. attorney's office in Colorado, which has been spearheaded by acting top federal prosecutor Bob Troyer for about 13 months. That time period isn't necessarily unusual, officials say, though it still can put the state at a disadvantage. "The work of the U.S. attorney's office is carried out by dedicated career staff whose efforts continue full-force, even in the absence of a presidentially appointed U.S. attorney," said John Walsh, who held the role until leaving in July 2016. "But a presidential appointee's voice carries added weight in Washington, D.C., to make sure the office and its people get the budget, staffing and mission support they need to protect the public here in Colorado," Walsh added. Also in the justice realm, Colorado lacks a U.S. marshal to lead the agency that handles law enforcement for federal courts.

Records show Judge Robert Blackburn has yet to be replaced since taking senior status on Colorado's U.S. District Court bench -- which has a crowded caseload -- and there is no nominee to replace him. Colorado Supreme Court Justice Allison Eid was tapped in June to replace

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Gorsuch. Her nomination hearing was just set for Sept. 20. Another agency lacking a full-time regional administrator for Colorado and the region is FEMA. But so far, coming off a mild wildfire season in the state, no major problems have been reported.

Darren Coldwell, county administrator in Lincoln County, Mont., praised the agency for its response to the fires burning tens of thousands of acres in the area he oversees. More than a dozen structures -- including homes -- have burned there, and FEMA has been quick to respond. "We did just get approved here in the last couple of days for FEMA assistance," he said Monday. "They have been very responsive. I don't know if not having that person in there made a difference."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Montanian
August 15, 2017

Commissioners declare state of emergency

In a move designed to make the county eligible for state funding assistance, the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners last week passed a declaration of emergency for Lincoln County.

Lincoln County Administrator **Darren Coldwell** said the move makes the county eligible to file for reimbursement for firefighting expenses in excess of two mills, should the county spend that much during the fire season. Two mills equates to roughly \$70,000, **Coldwell** said. “The approval of the declaration is in response to the expected costs that the County may incur, because of the Gibraltar Ridge fire in Eureka,” he said. “It basically is to protect the taxpayers of Lincoln County. There is no reason for people to read more into the declaration than a precaution that the County has to follow by law.”

The two mill threshold to qualify for state assistance only applies to the county’s responsibility in relation to the fire, **Coldwell** said. The state and federal shares of the cost are not included in the eligibility calculation.

Lincoln County, the City of Libby, the Kootenai National Forest, and the state lands in northwest Montana are currently under Stage II fire restrictions based upon current drought and fire danger conditions. **Coldwell** said residents should not panic, but should also exercise extreme caution in helping prevent additional fires.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Independent Record (Helena, MT)
July 4, 2017

Annual Troy Fourth of July brings families together

Author: PERRY BACKUS

John and Lori Lark-McBride had their patch of shade staked along the busy Old Fashioned Fourth of July parade route in Troy. Waving their own small flags, the Libby natives relived their childhoods, watching their grandchildren do whatever they could to encourage candy to come flying their way.

The couple now live in Oregon, but the trip to Troy to celebrate the nation's birthday has become a tradition that they rarely miss. "It's our old stomping grounds," said John McBride. "We come home to see family. We make it a point to get here for this celebration." And a celebration it is. People started marking their spots along the parade route several hours before the first trailer load of veterans came by, waving to the crowd and throwing handfuls of candy to hordes of anxious children waiting with plastic bags in one hand and a flag in the other. "It's so beautiful here," McBride said. "We're always glad to get home." Before the parade got underway, Jeremiah Folker and his daughter, Claire, took a seat on the step on his logging truck and waved to friends as they drove by. There was the time when the parade had a large contingent of logging and mining machinery. Those days are long gone. "This is still our way of the life," Folker said. "We want it to be represented in the parade. Nobody really does it anymore."

With almost every part of her body covered in red, white and blue, including a pair of Elton John-like glasses and a pair of flags pointing skyward like elves' ears, Folker's daughter was anxious for him to fire up the truck and get moving. "I love to throw candy," she said. "How much longer?" Just across the street, the Women of Troy drill team gathered with their old-style webbed beach chairs they chose as props this year.

Hildy Johnson was feeling a bit nervous when she woke up Tuesday morning, but everything was just fine once she was surrounded by the women who have marched up and down the dump road with her over the past couple of weeks while learning their routine. "The road is straight and nobody uses it after 6 p.m.," Johnson said. "It's the perfect place to practice." This is the third year the 18 or so women offered their show to an appreciative crowd lining the streets. Last year, they chose umbrellas as their prop and the year before that, it was cordless drills. "We were kind of like Rosie the Riveter that year," Johnson said. "The crowd response has always been amazing. It is a little bit nerve-wracking. We're just a bunch of housewives or retirees, for heaven's sake. This is probably pushing ourselves a little bit beyond our limits, but we certainly do have fun doing it."

Up in the very front of the very first trailer filled with veterans sat 101-year-old Homer Davis with a young neighbor boy named Davie Joe sitting on his knee. Davis couldn't quite remember just how many of these parades that he's ridden in, but he knows it's been a lot. He's been part of the Troy community since the 1970s when he and his brother moved to town to open a bar. The

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

town was different then and so was the parade. For one thing, folks who got to know Davis also had the opportunity to sample some of his famous moonshine. "I used to make some good moonshine back in the day," he said, with a twinkle in his eye. "It was a lot better than what they have to drink today." Davis served in World War II and helped direct traffic at the famous Battle of the Bulge. He can still remember General Patton's booming voice when he wanted something to happen fast. "He was kind of an orangutan, but he was a good soldier, too," Davis said. While Troy has its own set of orangutans, Davis said it's also filled with a lot of good people. "There will always be orangutans no matter where you go," he said, as he pushed the flag hanging on the side of the trailer back behind his head. "It's a good town. I have a tremendous number of friends here, but now I can't remember all their names."

Most of the men that he knew who fought in WWII are gone now. "There's nobody left that I can sit and tell my stories to," he said. "I can lie all I want and no one even knows." Troy's mayor for now — he's giving up the job after finding a new job in nearby Libby — raced around on a four-wheeler to make sure everyone in the parade found their place.

"This is the one thing every year that Troy does really well," said **Darren Coldwell**. "We've been doing this pushing 100 years or more. It's a good hometown event that requires everyone to come together to make it happen." It ends with a \$10,000 fireworks display. "When you consider that there's only 900 people in town, that's \$11 a person," he said. "It's just a great day for Troy."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

https://lincolncountymt.us/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Clerks_Corner_May-17.pdf
May 2017

Clerks Corner

Clerk & Recorder: Robin Benson

Budget FY 17/18: Lincoln County has restructured the county budget and its process under a Finance Department which includes payroll and accounting personnel. With this change, we welcome County Administrator **Darren Coldwell** as the Finance Director. This is a positive adjustment and creates an improved budget process for county government and the taxpayers.

We are again starting the budget process early. FY 17/18 budget work sessions began in February and are ongoing every week throughout the budget process. I am in full support of establishing a Finance Department. With more eyes on the budget, there is more attention to detail; all services are being looked at and everything is on the table.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Western News
February 3, 2017

Coldwell hired as county administrator

By Bethany Rolfson

As of Tuesday afternoon, Troy Mayor **Darren Coldwell** is the new county administrator. **Coldwell** will assume the position on Feb. 20. The announcement also comes with the news that **Coldwell** has recently sold his store of 25 years, Booze N' Bait, which is in escrow. "When this became available, I felt really confident that I could help out," **Coldwell** said. "It's a whole new chapter for me." District 1 Commissioner Mark Peck has been serving as interim county administrator since Aug. 1, 2015 after Bill Bischoff resigned as the county's administrative assistant. The commissioners told **Coldwell** that he could finish out his term as mayor of Troy. The county administrator is in charge of getting bids on projects, budgets and putting commissioners' meeting agenda together. He also deals with internal, administrative issues, and deals with the public when an individual has something they want to put on the County Commissioners' agenda.

In terms of conflicts of interest, **Coldwell** doesn't believe there will be any, because the mayor position is volunteer. However, he said that if there's any conflict at all he will step away and let another city council member handle it. His budget experience, he said, comes with the volunteer time at the school board and the last three and a half years with the City of Troy. **Coldwell** was sworn in as mayor in January of 2014. **Coldwell** also holds a bachelor's from the University of Montana in Interpersonal Communications. "I'm just excited to have a new challenge and I'm hoping that I can help them out with a fresh set of eyes looking at it from a different perspective," **Coldwell** said.

During the course of the last two months the County Commissioners had held two different application cycles for the administrative position and the final wrapped up earlier this week. In total, the county received 38 applicants, and six different individuals were interviewed earlier this week. Commissioner Mike Cole noted that each of the individuals were very qualified, which made the decision that much more difficult. Out of the six, four were Lincoln County natives. Cole said that two stuck out of the individuals they interviewed, The hiring committee was comprised of Robin Benson, Nancy Trotter-Higgins, Victor White and the commissioners Cole, Peck and Jerry Bennett. "I think the committee did a great job of evaluating all of the candidates," Cole said.

Mark Peck said he was impressed with **Coldwell**'s track record in Troy, and the commissioners concurred that **Coldwell** stuck out the most as a candidate because of his leadership and budget experience. "I think I was clear all along, that if I had to choose between a financial guru or a good leader — give me a good leader," Peck said. "You can learn the financial piece, but you can't teach someone how to lead." County Clerk and Recorder Benson said, and Peck agreed, that with **Coldwell** they got both financial and leadership skills. "I think all you have to do is look at his track record in Troy and what he's done financially with the City of Troy" Peck said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Flat Head Beacon
September 16, 2015

Community of Troy Hits Century Mark

By Justin Franz

The history books that chronicle the life and times of Montana are littered with towns that didn't quite make it; communities that fizzled out before putting down solid roots. For many communities, their prospects were tied to the boom and bust cycles of the mineral industry. When prices were good, miners from across the country would rush to an area hoping to strike it rich. But when the mineral deposits were gone or the values dropped, prospectors would pack their wagons and hit the dusty trail. That is very much how the story of Troy could have ended. The first miners arrived in 1886 and set up a tent camp at the mouth of Lake Creek, just south of where the town is today. But unlike other mining camps that disappeared into the pages of history, Troy survived and this month it celebrated its 100th anniversary with a series of events on Sept. 12 and 13. After those first miners set up camp near where Lake Creek meets the Kootenai River, they found their mineral claims were bountiful and more prospectors beat the path to the area. That path to Troy was soon widened in 1891 when the Great Northern Railway built its rapidly growing transcontinental line through town. The construction of steel rails cemented the community's future and the following year the city's first lodging house, the Windsor Hotel, was built. In June 1892, the town of Troy was created within the boundaries of Missoula County, which at the time encompassed most of western Montana. A few months after the hotel went up, Libby postmaster J.P. Bowen built the first house there.

The town grew even faster beginning in September 1892, when the Great Northern built a rail yard in Troy, complete with a station, roundhouse, coal chute and living quarters. The combination of rowdy railroaders and mischievous miners made Troy a hot spot for those looking for a good time. A visitor once described the scene in detail, writing, "Such sights and sounds that met the eyes and horrified the ears of this young woman from the east, were spectacular to say the least. Fifteen saloons gaily lit filed to the doors with 'wild men and wild women' yelling, singing, dancing, and cursing, with glasses held high, such was Troy." Troy's rowdy ways would continue for another two decades until 1915, when it decided it should and become a real town. In July of that year it voted to incorporate and on Sept. 9 the city council met for the first time. U.S. Highway 2 was also constructed to Troy that year and by the end of 1915 more than 350 people called it home. By the 1920s, the timber industry began to grow and within a few years its population grew to over 1,000 residents. By 1923, Troy was the richest town in Lincoln County. Its population peaked a few years later at 1,300 residents. The Great Depression and a series of fires took a toll on the town in the 1930s, but through the years it has persevered and today about 950 people live there.

Mayor **Darren Coldwell** said considering all the other communities that have come and gone, it's amazing that Troy has made it more than a century. He attributed that success to its people. "The people make this place special," **Coldwell** said. "There have been many ups and downs over the years."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Flat Head Beacon
December 23, 2014

Libby, Troy Replace City Attorney with Law Firms
Lincoln County communities hire lawyers out of Helena and Whitefish for their legal services

By Justin Franz

Two towns in Lincoln County have turned to law firms for their legal services instead of employing a single city attorney on contract. In early December, Libby and Troy's city councils voted to hire law firms out of Helena and Whitefish after both towns' attorneys left their positions. Libby contracted with Doney Crowley P.C. in Helena where Allen Payne will cover civil issues and Marc Buyske will cover criminal prosecution. Troy is contracting with Hedman, Hileman & LaCosta in Whitefish where Clifton Hayden will work on civil cases and Caleb Simpson will serve as the city prosecutor. The vacancies occurred earlier this year when Troy city attorney Heather McDougall and Libby's James Reintsma announced they were both stepping down from their city council-appointed positions.

Mayor Doug Roll said Payne had approached him earlier this year about his Helena firm taking over for Reintsma. Payne is a Libby native and has been involved with numerous legal issues in the community before, including helping get a settlement from International Paper a few years ago and representing the Lincoln County Port Authority in its lawsuit against Stinger Welding. Payne's firm was hired by the city council in a three-to-two vote earlier this month. "We've known Allen for years and he has done a lot for this community," Roll said. Payne's firm, Doney Crowley P.C., will be paid about \$5,600 a month or about \$67,000 annually. That is significantly more than what the last attorney was paid, but Roll said the city will get more services and there is too much work in Libby for one attorney to handle. "It was a heck of a lot of work and you need more than one attorney," Roll said. "Even if we have to pay a little more, I'm tired of having the city underrepresented."

Troy will be paying considerably less for its new attorney, although the workloads between the two jobs are considerably different. Troy Mayor **Darren Coldwell** said the attorneys at Hedman, Hileman & LaCosta in Whitefish would be paid an hourly rate of \$100. He said the new agreement should save the city \$4,000 to \$5,000 annually; the previous attorney was paid about \$20,000 a year. When the contracted city attorney needs to appear at a city council meeting, they will be able to appear through videophone.

In the past it was common for communities to have a single city attorney, but David Nielsen, interim director of the Montana League of Cities and Towns, said more towns are now working with larger legal firms. He said the larger firms often have more resources and more attorneys that specialize in different aspects of the law. "It's a better deal for the cities and towns," Nielsen said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Flat Head Beacon
March 1, 2014

After Mathematical Error, Lincoln County’s Budget Under Scrutiny
By Beacon Staff

Almost a month after Lincoln County officials stood before a packed meeting room and told their constituents that a mathematical error resulted in county residents being overtaxed to the tune of \$2.1 million, the commission is looking at how it can trim costs and pay people back. Among the suggestions is a plan to close the Troy Area Dispatch and combine its services with the Lincoln County Sheriff’s dispatch in Libby.

But Troy Mayor **Darren Coldwell** said closing the dispatcher’s office would detrimental to the community. “I would hate to see Troy lose that service,” he said. “A lot of people think that Troy Area Dispatch just dispatches emergency services, but it’s a lot more than that.”

The error that has worsened Lincoln County’s already tight budget was found late last year, when someone noticed the county had allowed 56.86 mills to be levied for the Troy Area Dispatch, when it should have only been 31.91 mills. The mills are supposed to rise with inflation. Instead, upon further inspection, the county realized that taxes were inflating above and beyond that level. During the 2010–2011 fiscal year, dispatch received \$8,526.36 more than it should have; in 2011–2012 it received \$43,213 too much; in 2012–2013, \$111,278.10; and in 2013–2014, \$216,915.30; for a grand total of \$379,932.76 over four years. Additional mistakes were found in how the Troy Parks District and the Lincoln County Campus District received funding. In all, Lincoln County over-taxed its citizens by \$2,112,597.25, according to preliminary and unverified figures offered by the county.

L. Harold Blattie, executive director of the Montana Association of Counties, said the error happened sometime around 2009 when the county clerk and recorder was calculating tax data that determines how many mills can be levied in each district. Instead of entering the gross proceeds money received from the Troy Mine, the clerk entered the taxable value of that money and that mistake resulted in the mill levies exceeding their limits. On Feb. 7, the Lincoln County commissioners and Tammy Lauer, the clerk and recorder responsible for the mistake, met with citizens to inform them of what happened.

In the weeks since, officials have been combing over the books and have hired an independent auditor to look at the Troy Area Dispatch’s budget and audit all of the mill levy worksheets from the last three years. Once those reviews are completed, the county will figure out how to reimburse taxpayers. Commissioner Tony Berget said the county had hoped it would be able to simply issue a reimbursement check, but that turned out to be cost prohibitive. “It looks like we’re just going to have to reduce taxes for the next two or three years and we’re now debating how long that will take,” he said. “But we want to do it as quickly as possible.”

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Berget said the county is looking to make cuts anywhere it can, and one option is closing the Troy Area Dispatch, which is at the center of the mathematical mistake. Lincoln County Sheriff Roby Bowe has been hosting a series of public meetings about the matter and said consolidating the dispatch with the one in Libby would save money. “It would be just as effective as it is now,” Bowe said. According to Bowe, the Troy Area Dispatch’s budget is about \$250,000 annually. He argues his dispatchers could do the same job for \$10,000 every year, following an initial cost to update area radio towers that would cost \$300,000.

However, Mayor **Coldwell** and Troy Area Dispatch board member Gene Rogers said closing the local dispatching center doesn’t make sense, especially since it was recently refurbished. Besides dispatching police and fire services, the Troy Area Dispatch organizes school bus drivers, utility workers and even occasionally helps reunite people with a lost pet. If the dispatching center were to close in Troy, six people would also lose their jobs. “That’s six families impacted by this,” he said. “That’s not good for Troy.”

Berget said it would be up to the people to decide if the Troy Area Dispatch should close and it may be put on the ballot in June. “It was voted in by the people and so we think it’s right that they decide what happens,” he said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Western News
February 25, 2014

Troy Council votes to pay Chief McLeod's legal expenses

By Phil Johnson

What a difference an election can make. A few months after the previous Troy City Council balked at the idea of accepting donated exercise equipment, citing concerns of insurance liability should someone fall six inches off a balance beam, and hesitated to cover the payment of Police Chief Bob McLeod's legal fees for an incident in which he used a stungun on a handcuffed man in the back of a police car seven years ago, the panel voted to approve both matters at Monday night's meeting.

The approved fitness trail will be a donation from Troy Park and Recreation. First entered onto the council's agenda near the end of former Mayor Tony Brown's tenure, the fitness trail will include more than a dozen unique stations providing instructions and equipment for stretching and exercise. Concern about potential liability issues, voiced by former Councilman Phil Fisher and supported by Brown, stalled the proposal last year. Before taking office, Mayor **Darren Coldwell** came out in support of the donation. During Monday's meeting, **Coldwell** led the movement to accept. "I talked to (Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority) and they have no problem with it," **Coldwell** said of the city's insurer. "I talked to the boys at the shop, and they have no problem with it, either."

After the donation was unanimously approved, **Coldwell** said he expects the installments to be placed beyond the fishing pond in Roosevelt Park. "I think it will be a great addition to the dead space back there," **Coldwell** said. Except for maintenance, which is expected to be minimal, **Coldwell** said installation will come at zero cost to the taxpayer.

Moving onto the heavier agenda item, payment of McLeod's legal fees, **Coldwell** prefaced public comments by saying he understands the diverse feelings on the topic. Former councilwoman Fran McCully, sitting in the audience, stated her continued disapproval of the payment. "If a person cannot admit their mistake, they are more likely to commit that mistake," McCully said. "If we pay this, we should pay it all now and not pass on a debt."

Brown, also in the audience, followed McCully's statement by questioning the city's fiduciary responsibility and Councilman Joe Arts' ability to separate friendship and civic responsibility. "I think Joe should recuse himself," Brown said. "I think he's defending Bob on a personal relationship and overlooking his elected duties to the citizens of Troy." Arts responded. "The fact that Bob is a friend of mine does not mean I do not respect my duty to the city, either," Arts said. "I am not going to vote yea or nay because he is a friend of mine."

Coldwell followed with a report on his research. **Coldwell** said he talked to a number of legal minds including Lincoln County Attorney Bernie Cassidy, Montana Municipal Interlocal Authority CEO Alan Hulse and past Troy City Attorney Charles Evans on the matter. All were in

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

agreement that the city is obligated to cover McLeod's fees. After some negotiation between **Coldwell**, McLeod and McLeod's attorney, Pat Flaherty, it was agreed the matter would be settled for \$22,713. Of that sum, \$12,713 will be paid to McLeod to cover out-of-pocket expenses he made during his successful defense in a Public Safety Officer Standards and Training Council, or POST, hearing. The hearing stemmed from a complaint filed against McLeod for using a Taser to subdue A.J. Haflich in November 2007 after a drunken-driving arrest. Payment of McLeod's fees passed unanimously. Payment will be made upon the signed agreement by McLeod and Flaherty that the matter is settled. The money will be paid in full during the current fiscal year.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Flat Head Beacon
January 10, 2014

New Mayor Sets Positive Tone in Troy

Author: Beacon Staff

Two years after a recall election split the community and its city government, the town of Troy has elected a new mayor who is trying to set a positive tone at City Hall. **Darren Coldwell** was sworn in on Jan. 2 as the town's third mayor in just as many years.

Coldwell replaced Mayor Tony Brown, who served for a year and a half after Donald Banning was ousted in a recall election in May 2012. **Coldwell** was elected in November with nearly 70 percent of the vote, taking 225 ballots compared to Brown's 98. The new mayor said he had thought about running in the past and finally decided to take the plunge in 2013. He has run Booze N' Bait, a liquor and sporting goods store in Troy since 1992. "I want to put a positive foot forward," he said. "I hope to set the tone that we are going to be a positive force."

Rumblings of political unrest begin in Troy during the winter of 2012, two years after Banning was first elected mayor. In January, city councilor Fran McCully began circulating a petition to recall Banning. Among the reasons she gave were that Banning had tried to fire then-City Attorney Charles Evans without consent from the city council; that in March 2011; the mayor had cashed a check to cover travel expenses that were never approved; that Banning had gone ahead with the construction of a picnic area at a local park and never consulted the council; and that Banning had gone forward with the codification of city ordinances but never told anyone. Banning maintained that he was only doing his job and that McCully was trying to grab more power for herself. Election officials accepted the petition and, after Banning tried to fight the effort in court, a recall election was held in May. Banning lost by 67 votes and on June 8 the council selected Brown to finish out Banning's term. But even with a new mayor, councilor Joe Arts said infighting persisted. He said he was hopeful about having new faces on the council. Along with **Coldwell**, Dallas Carr and Kimberly Rowse were elected to the board. "I think this will be a great improvement over what we had," Arts said. "We want to heal the city government after the past four years."

Coldwell said he is excited about getting Troy residents involved with their local government. He said he wants to tap into the town's rich community spirit that is most often displayed when neighbors need a helping hand. Most recently, that outpouring of support was shown to the victims of an apartment fire in December. Following the blaze, local residents donated everything from clothing to furniture to help the victims.

Coldwell has quickly made changes at City Hall. Soon after being sworn in, he created two committees; one to look into purchasing a new excavator and another to review the city's outdated drug policy. "I want to make improvements, I don't want to be a rubber stamper who just shows up once a month," he said. He said he hopes to go out and attract new business to the area, saying that while recent layoffs have been hard, it also means that there is a large workforce

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

ready to work. He touted Troy and Lincoln County’s quality of life and inexpensive cost of living.

Coldwell invites anyone to stop into City Hall if they have grievances or want to meet with him. He plans on being available on Monday morning and afternoons and Tuesday through Friday, from 3:30 to 5 p.m., “unless it’s sunny out and there’s a potential for golf,” he said.

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Western News
November 8, 2013

Coldwell wins Troy mayor; Carr and Rowse claim seats
by Phil Johnson

Out with the old and in with the new was the theme in Troy's elections as challenger **Darren Coldwell** handily defeated incumbent Tony Brown and two challengers were elected to City Council.

Coldwell claimed the mayoral election 225-98. The owner of the popular Booze N' Bait store, **Coldwell** is the son of former long-time Troy Elementary School principal Bobby K. **Coldwell**. The mayor-elect praised his predecessor minutes after learning of his election. "I want to say what a great job Tony did getting Troy back together," **Coldwell** said. "I look forward to sitting down with him and working together."

In the City Council race, challengers Dallas Carr and Kimberly Rowse were elected with 205 and 148 votes, respectively. Incumbent Phillip Fisher earned 129 votes, and challenger Donna Lee Rugani earned 107. Current City Council member Fran McCully did not run for reelection.

The election of a new mayor and two new council members completes a transformation of leadership that began when council members Joe Arts and Crystal Denton began their terms in January 2012. In June 2012, Mayor Donald Banning was recalled following allegations of attempting to fire City Attorney Charles Evans, cashing a check for travel expenses and approving construction of a picnic area without consulting with or getting approval from City Council. Brown, Troy's mayor from 1974-1979, filled the vacant seat left by Banning.

"I am happy for **Darren** and am sure he will do a great job," Brown said. "I plan to enjoy some more free time outdoors. We will sit down and talk policy. There is a lot to learn."

Rowse is a retired registered nurse who now owns and operates Hotel Montana.

A retired logger and miner who now coaches high school football and fast-pitch softball, Carr won on a simple campaign based on a willingness to compromise and listen to city's wishes. "I'm ready to get people back to getting along," Carr said after learning from a reporter of his election. "If the people elected me, I said I'd be ready to serve. I just wasn't too caught up in it. I was just watching a concert on TV."

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Western News
October 19, 2012

People Profile: Darren Coldwell

Author: Not Listed

Occupation: Owner of Booze 'n' Bait, Troy.

Tenure: Has owned Troy business for 21 years.

If you were not doing this job, what would you be doing? Traveling the world.

Family: Wife Barbie, children Donny, Billy and Allie.

Recognitions: President of Rotary, Director of Troy Chamber.

Hobbies: Golf, gardening, cooking, anything outdoors.

Darren was asked to complete these sentences beginning with “I am ...”:

— “I am ... happy to have a wonderful healthy family. ...”

— “I am ... lucky to be able to live in such a great place. ...”

— “I am ... thankful to be able to volunteer with such great people. ...”

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

Missoulian (Missoula, MT)
June 30, 2012

Troy plans special Fourth of July holiday

Author: the Missoulian

This town has always done Fourth of July up big, but this year will be something special. “The city has spent more time and money than ever to make Independence Day go off with a bang,” reports Ryan Murray of the Western News in Libby.

Darren Coldwell, one of nine volunteer organizers, said the fireworks show at Roosevelt Park on Wednesday night will be bigger. Almost \$7,000 worth of fireworks was supplemented by an additional 25 percent more as a bonus for buying so many.

But there’s much more – a quilt show the day before at W.F. Morrison School, more food vendors, a bigger car show and, once again, a couple of F-15s in a flyover at the parade. The day’s festivities, including a parade at 11 a.m., figure to draw 4,000-6,000 people, **Coldwell** said. A new rock band, Simon Sez from Coeur d’Alene, Idaho, will play from 7:30 p.m. until the fireworks show at 11 p.m. “It’s been a real community effort,” **Coldwell** said. “People should come out because it is just so much fun.”

Internet – Newspaper Archives Searches
Darren Newell Coldwell
(Articles are in reverse chronological order)

The Western News
April 14, 2010

Troy School Board to hire HS principal

By Canda Harbaugh

The Troy School Board voted Monday to vacate a proposal to cut one of its three administrator positions, choosing instead to move forward in hiring a replacement for resigning high school principal Jeff Ralston. In light of receiving information that Troy schools would not meet state accreditation standards with less than the equivalent of 2-1/2 administrators, the board chose to continue the format as-is. The original proposal involved elementary school principal Lance Pearson filling the high school principal position, and Superintendent Brady Selle delegating some of his work so that he could take on both the superintendent and elementary school principal roles. Approving additional office personnel hours or assigning a teacher a leadership role to pick up the slack would have cost considerably less than a principal's salary and benefits at \$83,000 per year. However, the superintendent cannot take on more responsibilities, the state said, because Troy schools exceed 30 full-time equivalent employees. "It was a moot point after we found out we have to have 2-1/2 administrators," Trustee **Darren Coldwell** said. "We're six teachers over."

The board discussed other ways to reorganize administration positions, since the equivalent of only 1-1/2 principals is required to lead the two schools. Trustees entertained the idea of appointing Pearson as principal of both schools, and assigning someone to assist him – a part-time vice principal or a lead teacher at both schools. "I guess I like the idea of Lance bouncing between both schools and having a dean of students at each school because we're going to save quite a bit of money by doing that," Trustee Steve Garrett said at Monday's meeting. "The bottom line is that it's easier to do this now than later." A lead teacher, or dean of students, would not meet the state's requirement of an administrator, however, unless the individual was certified and licensed to be a principal, Selle said.

Hiring a part-time principal in place of a full-time one wouldn't save nearly enough money to justify the switch, **Coldwell** said, especially if money must be spent elsewhere to make up for the cut. "When you throw in benefits, retirement – I mean, unless you get rid of one whole person, which was our original thought, then we could save \$50,000 or \$60,000," **Coldwell** said. "If you can only save \$10,000 or \$20,000, that's not worth it in a \$6 million budget. I think it's better to have a full-time principal." In a 5-1 vote, with Garrett opposing, the board chose to hire a new full-time high school principal. The hiring committee is in the process of paring 16 applicants down to four or five, Selle said Wednesday. He anticipates commencing interviews early next week.

Research Compiled by: Liliana Oberg
 Colin Baenziger & Associates