



City of Irving *City Manager's Report*

January 10, 2007

Projects/Activities Updates

Lake Chapman Water Level – The recent rains have increased the level of Lake Chapman to 426.45 feet. In all, the lake has risen more than four feet in the past few weeks. More rain is anticipated this weekend, and we are optimistic the lake level will rise further.

Minimum Development Standards for Hotels – On Jan. 2, the Planning and Zoning Commission recommended approval of amendments to the city's minimum development standards for new hotels as proposed by the Irving Convention and Visitors Bureau. The City Council Planning and Development Committee received a briefing on these amendments Jan. 4. The amendments are scheduled for consideration by the full City Council on Jan. 25.

Smoking Ordinance Update – Following the passage of the updated revisions to the smoking ordinance, staff sent a letter explaining the changes to all establishments that allowed smoking. Thus far, 17 establishments have purchased smoking permits. Three former smoking establishments have indicated that they have made the decision to become smoke-free. Establishments have until Jan. 15 to obtain a permit or indicate that they have become smoke-free facility.

New City Staff – Two key positions have been filled within the Public Health and Environmental Services Department over the past few weeks. Fred Sanderson has been hired to fill the vacant Animal Services Supervisor position and began his duties on Jan. 8. He comes to Irving most recently from Lubbock and, prior to that, was the supervisor in Grand Prairie where he played a major role in the construction of the Prairie Paws Animal Shelter. Fred is highly respected in his field and will be a great asset in the rebuilding of our Animal Services program. Another important addition to the department is Brian Jones, who will assume his duties as Environmental Health Specialist on Jan. 15. Brian has a degree in microbiology from Arizona State University.

Agenda Management System Implementation – Staff is moving forward with implementing the new agenda management system, with internal training now being conducted. The system allows the automated creation and submission of agenda items, the attachment of supporting material, and generates a final document for electronic or hard-copy viewing. It is designed to make agenda item creation and submission simple and uniform. Final document preparation is substantially easier. In-meeting and post-meeting tasks can be streamlined and performed. Legal notification can be automated. Tracking of meeting minutes can be automated and, in some cases, indexed to media. Agenda creation using both auto and manual methods will be set for Jan. 25-Feb. 8. Evaluation, final configuration and go-live dates are set for the Feb. 22 City Council meeting.

Wireless Access from City Facilities – Information Technology has installed and configured wireless access points in three major city facilities, giving employees wireless access to the city's network from their tablet-PCs or laptops. Employees can seamlessly move from facility-to-facility or floor-to-floor while connected to the city's network. The department also is in the process of implementing a pilot project at the Northwest Branch Library, which will provide public wireless Internet access and a dedicated fast Internet connection for the library-owned public computers. After a 30-day pilot, this service will be implemented at the remaining four library sites.

Pay Increase Summary – The City of Irving has completed an analysis and update of its employee pay plan. The changes became effective Dec. 31, and any increases to pay will appear on Jan. 19 paychecks. The city's established compensation philosophy is to set pay at the 65th percentile of the market in order to remain competitive. To determine the level of increases at the 65th percentile, data was collected from the other nine cities in the Metroplex 10 group. The resulting average salary increase for all employees will be approximately 1.5 percent (2.7 percent for civil service employees and 0.7 percent for general government employees). All civil service employees will experience a salary increase; however, only those general government employees in selected classifications that must be adjusted for market competitiveness will experience an increase at this time (approximately one-third of general government employees). Most employees are still eligible for merit step increases of 3.5 percent on their scheduled review dates. The estimated financial impact for the pay plan adjustment for fiscal year 2006-07 is approximately \$1.3 million. The use of the 65th percentile statistic as an anchor to the market ensures that all commonly found classifications are tied directly to the market. All other general government job classifications are evaluated for similarities and differences, and placed at an appropriate level either above or below the classification that is anchored to the market. Because of data availability and the need for consistent competitiveness, all civil service classifications are set directly to the 65th percentile. Pay tables for general government employees will remain the same, while some classifications move from one pay grade to another, but all civil service pay tables will increase. While this market adjustment will occur now, employees below the top step of the pay grade are still eligible for merit step increases of 3.5 percent on the next review date.

Utility Bill Insert – Residents will have a new city publication in their utility bills beginning this month. The Corporate Communications Office now produces *City Briefs*, which takes the place of the individual inserts that previously were included in each billing statement. The new publication, printed in English and Spanish, allows greater flexibility and the opportunity to provide more information to Irving residents on a monthly basis. The new format also is less expensive to produce than the individual cards.

New IV Therapy for Children – The Fire Department has ordered new pediatric interosseous needles to be used when starting IV therapy on small children. This system allows the paramedic to drill a small needle directly into the shin bone of a child and start IV therapy in lieu of trying to thread a catheter into a tiny vein. The department has been using this system on adults for some time and it has proven to be a lifesaver. The speed of the process, as well as the sure ability to immediately begin giving medications, makes interosseous IV the best option during a serious emergency.

Manager's Video Message – The City Manager's video message for January emphasizes employee wellness and can be viewed on the ICEnet, the city's intranet. The first message, produced and aired in December, received a positive response from city employees. This video message is created by ICTN's City Productions team, in conjunction with Corporate Communications and Information Technology.

Multicultural Series at Library – This month the Central Library kicks off a six-month programming series, Celebrate the Cultures of Irving, to help bring residents together to learn more about each other's customs and culture. The series supports the diversity initiatives set forth by the city's Strategic Plan.

Radio Availability Expanded – The Fire Department has reached its goal of providing a portable radio for every person on the fire ground. Now, each firefighter can hear emergency warnings, or call out for help, regardless of where they may be. This major safety improvement has been a longtime goal of the department and of city management. The radios are used in many other day-to-day emergencies, but will prove to be the greatest safety asset during fire operations in a burning building.

Wellness Program – Human Resources staff is developing a request for proposal for a comprehensive wellness program that would provide employees with health screening and incentive programs based on participation and/or achievement of certain goals. Council will be briefed on the proposal before it is released to prospective vendors in February. Plans are under way for Aetna to conduct an outreach effort to employees and dependents who could be candidates for the different disease and health management programs now available to health plan participants effective Jan. 1, the beginning of the city's new health plan year.

Retiree Medical Insurance – The Human Resources Department briefed the City Council Audit and Finance Committee about the city's initiative to enter into an interlocal agreement with PEBA (Public Employee Benefit Alliance), an alliance of Texas public entities to make Medicare supplemental health plans available to retirees and retirees' spouses. That agreement will be brought to the full City Council for a formal vote on Jan. 25. In the interim, letters have been sent to retirees and their spouses, who are age 65 and older and covered on the city's health plan, announcing the new plan and a special enrollment date scheduled for Jan. 12 at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. Also, Aetna has mailed packets to retirees to provide details about the plan. Enrollment in these plans is optional and will not cause retirees or their spouses to lose their eligibility to return to the city's health plan in the future, if they so desire. The new Medicare supplement plan will take effect on Feb. 1.

Automotive Parts Room Operation – NAPA will begin operating a full-service automotive parts room at the Garage starting Jan. 15. The new system will provide a greater resource of parts available within a quicker timeframe. This change also will improve efficiency and cost savings by eliminating the overhead of parts, the need to maintain an inventory, and the maintenance of various parts contracts.

Marketing Videos – Irving Community Television Network (ICTN) is in the process of shooting and editing a marketing video to be used by city staff and officials for community presentations. This video will be shown for the first time at the State of the City Address on Jan. 23. Production of the high definition marketing video, to be shown at the Greater Irving/Las Colinas Chamber of Commerce marketing center, will begin mid-January.

Recognitions/Awards

Library NETLS Grant – The Irving Public Library has been awarded a \$4,944 grant from the Northeast Texas Library System (NETLS). The money will go toward the purchase of self-contained digital audio books to circulate through a new outreach program serving assisted living centers and nursing homes. The audio books are easy to use and will provide hours of enjoyment for senior citizens who reside in these facilities.

Boxers to Represent City – Two amateur boxers from the Irving Police Athletic League (PAL) have been invited to participate in a "box off" to represent the United States in this year's Pan American Games. Due to their elite national ranking in amateur boxing, David DeLaCruz (the son of Irving Officer Rey DeLaCruz) and Roberto Marroquin were invited to participate in the event, which will be held during the week of Jan. 15 in Colorado Springs. If they qualify, the Pan American Games will be held in Rio de Janeiro. Both athletes are long-time participants in the city's PAL program.

Upcoming Events/Activities

Martin Luther King Jr. Observance – The annual MLK program is set for 7 p.m. Jan. 15 at the Irving Arts Center's Carpenter Performance Hall. Jubilee Theatre will provide a special performance. In addition, Nokia Inc. will conduct scholarship presentations to the four Martin Luther King essay contest winners. The event is free and open to the public.

Mayor Gears on "Open Line" – Mayor Herbert Gears will be featured on ICTN's "Open Line" to share what is on the horizon for the City of Irving during 2007. The live, call-in show will air at 7 p.m. Jan. 17. The show can be seen on ICTN 1 (Time Warner Channel 16, Verizon Channel 30) or over the Internet at icn.tv.

Job Fair – The Irving Public Library's Job Center is hosting a job fair from 1 to 4 p.m. Jan. 18 in the Central Library Auditorium. Recruiters from local companies will meet with job-seekers to discuss openings and receive résumés.