



Communications Advisory Commission
Dec. 2, 2019
Regular Session
6:00 p.m.
City Council Chambers
1 Quail Creek Circle, North Liberty, Iowa

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Public Comment
5. Staff Report
6. North Liberty Bulletin Discussion
7. FY21 Budget Request
8. Old Business
9. New Business
10. Adjournment



North Liberty Communications Advisory Commission

Meeting Minutes

Monday, Oct. 7, 2019

6:00 p.m. Regular Session

City Council Chambers, 1 Quail Creek Circle

1. Call to order.

Commissioner Wells called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

2. Roll call.

In attendance were commissioners Wells, Moore and Hoffman. Also in attendance were Nick Bergus, Jillian Miller and Joel Miller.

3. Public comment for items not on the agenda.

There was none.

4. Approval of minutes.

Moore moved, and Hoffman seconded, to approve the minutes from July 1, 2019. The motion passed with all in favor.

5. Staff report.

Bergus and Miller shared staff activities over the months of July, August and September.

6. Budget FY20.

Bergus discussed the upcoming budget cycle, last fiscal year's request and the funding received, and plans for requesting funding for the upcoming fiscal year.

7. Old business.

There was none.

8. New business

There was none.

9. Adjourn.

Hoffman moved, Moore seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 6: p.m. The motion passed with all voting in favor. The next meeting is set for November 4, 2019 at 6 p.m.

Communications Department Report

Submitted Nov. 27, 2019, for the month of November 2019

Community Visioning

The final report from de Novo from the community survey, including verbatim comments, was disseminated in early November. Staff spent two days with de Novo shooting for the brand rollout video. A final shoot date is scheduled for early December with a final video coming in late December or early January. Additionally, staff will be meeting with Shive-Hattery and de Novo regarding some of the planning and physical design that was part of this project.

Beat the Bitter

Registration for the events, held Jan. 25 through Feb. 1, 2020, opened on Friday, Nov. 22, and are meeting our expectations. The annual Snuggie Crawl sold out in 27 hours and the second Igloo Jam is about half sold, and sales of Winter Games events are on target. These registrations pay the costs of the events and pay for free programming, most notably Fire & Ice, a free family day which we have moved to Sunday to make it more accessible. Registration and more information are available at beatthebitter.com.

Girls on the Run

Derek has begun post-production on a video for Girls on the Run of Eastern Iowa, a non-profit that "inspire[s] girls to be joyful, healthy and confident using a fun, experience-based curriculum which creatively integrates running," focusing on the organization's Coach of the Year and North Liberty resident Valerie Hoffman. A short teaser of the production geared towards social media was completed this month, with the longer piece coming in December.

Transit Assistance Program

We assisted administration with digital assets and media relations for the program's roll out, garnering coverage from all three local news stations as well as newspaper coverage. Registration has been reportedly robust, and the first cards were mailed the week of Thanksgiving.

Returning Citizen Reentry Simulation

We partnered with Inside Out Reentry Community to offer a simulation allowing attendees to experience life – and its barriers – as ex-offenders on their path to re-establishing themselves as law-abiding, taxpaying citizens, hosting about three dozen community leaders.

Other Items

We produced City Council meetings and submitted them to the Iowa City government channel.

Staff represented the city in meetings and events with the Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce, the area Complete Count Committee, Your Best Lawn soil quality restoration campaign, and Think Iowa City's Event Planning Association.

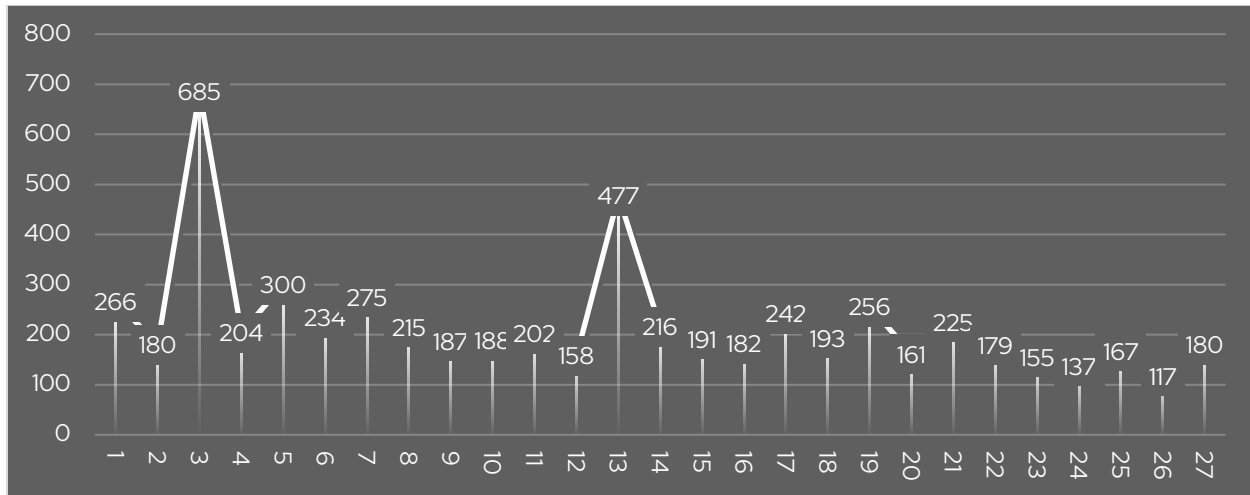
We sent news releases about the MPOJC's bicycle master plan, Citizen's Police Academy, leaf collection, the transportation assistance program, Beat the Bitter and more.

Completed Videos

Title	Requested By	Completed	Duration
Planning and Zoning	City Administration	Nov. 5	0:18
Social: Beat the Bitter 5K	Communications	Nov. 5	0:01
Social: Beat the Bitter Kick Ball	Communications	Nov. 5	0:01
Social: Beat the Bitter Curling	Communications	Nov. 5	0:01
Social: Beat the Bitter Fire & Ice	Communications	Nov. 5	0:01
Social: Beat the Bitter Broomball	Communications	Nov. 5	0:01
Social: Beat the Bitter Snuggie	Communications	Nov. 5	0:01
Social: Z's Build-Your-Own Pizza	Communications	Nov. 5	0:01
Parks and Recreation	City Administration	Nov. 7	1:08
City Council	City Administration	Nov. 12	0:41
Social: Beat the Bitter Igloo Jam	Communications	Nov. 8	0:02
Social: Beat the Bitter Igloo Jam	Communications	Nov. 12	0:01
Library Board of Trustees	City Administration	Nov. 18	0:24
Social: Student Showcase	Communications	Nov. 15	0:02
Social: Returning Citizen Reentry Sim	Communications	Nov. 20	0:03
Social: Girls on the Run	Communications	Nov. 26	0:02
Unofficial Minutes	Communications	Nov. 26	0:02
Promo: Storytime with City Circle's Annie	Communications	Nov. 26	0:02
Storytime with City Circle's Annie	Communications	Nov. 26	0:22
City Council	City Administration	Nov. 26	1:48
Total completed productions: 20	Duration of new video: 5 hours		

52317 Podcast

Release schedule is every three weeks; episodes can be found at northlibertyiowa.org/52317.



Downloads is the number times the podcast file was downloaded to a player, including a podcast client, webpage-embedded player or other device since its publication. Numbers are as reported by service provider LibSyn as of the date of this report. **Episodes** 1: Revisit; 2: Big Picture; 3: Mosley's; 4: Geek City; 5: Rusciano's; 6: AlphaGraphics; 7: Colony Pumpkin Patch; 8: South Slope; 9: Z's Catering; 10: Santa Claus; 11: Sugar Bottom Bikes; 12: Diventures; 13: NLXF; 14: Sugapeach; 15: Champaign Dance 16: Black Diamond Limosine; 17: Moxie Solar; 18: Flyover Productions; 19: Citywide Garage Sales; 20: North Liberty Aquatics; 21: Heyn's Ice Cream 22: Café Muse 23: Frontier Co-op 24: The Leaderboard 25: Stoakes & Fell 26: All the Way Up Studio; 27: Smash Juice Bar

North Liberty Bulletin Email Newsletters

Release schedule is first Thursday of the month; subscribe at northlibertyiowa.org/subscribe.



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Subject lines Nov: Pretty sure you didn't listen/Let's try this again; Oct: Between a rock and a soft place; Sept: Live your best lawn; Aug: 🍷🍷 Let's show 'em what we've got; July: Decade-long forecast; June: What about jetpacks?; May: No, you're a faceless

bureaucracy; April: We're not big timing you; March: Does it spark joy?; Feb: I'm so done; Jan: It's not all babies and balloons; Dec: Thanks for being great; Nov: Stop shouting at me; Oct: Talking 🗣️;

Social Media

Month	Facebook		Twitter		Instagram	Nextdoor
	New likes	Reach	New follows	Impressions	New follows	Members
Nov 2019	73	42,067	24	46,400	20 (1840)	4,240
Oct 2019	104	36,908	23	49,700	40 (1820)	4,219
Sept 2019	81	42,951	7	36,800	20 (1780)	4,143
Aug 2019	72	18,317	8	40,000	28 (1760)	3,993
July 2019	59	32,810	21	47,100	41 (1732)	3,946
June 2019	97	36,203	27	31,500	23 (1691)	3,845
May 2019	51	24,463	28	39,500	71 (1668)	3,793
April 2019	81	30,549	16	47,400	94 (1597)	3,746
March 2019	44	29,403	35	37,600	36 (1503)	3,571
Feb 2019	138	47,462	26	42,500	34 (1503)	3,443
Jan 2019	139	51,797	35	59,800	56 (1469)	3,391
Dec 2018	65	40,942	31	36,700	47 (1413)	3,344
Nov 2018	105	24,841	25	131,000	30 (1366)	3,308

Facebook new likes is the net number of new users liking the city's Facebook page; it does not include new *followers*. **Facebook reach** is the number of unique users who saw any of the city's Facebook content, reported on a 28-day period. **Twitter new follows** is the net number of new users following the city on Twitter. **Twitter impressions** is the total number of times a tweet from the city was shown to a user. **Instagram new follows** is the net number of new users liking the city's Instagram account. **Nextdoor members** is the number of verified North Liberty residents who are users and able to receive our agency messages.

Website Statistics

Month	Sessions	Users	Pageviews	Pgs/Session	Avg Session
Nov 2019	17,947	12,622	35,334	2.14	1:25
Oct 2019	20,233	14,122	43,473	2.15	1:24
Sept 2019	17,656	12,738	37,830	2.14	1:23
Aug 2019	20,191	13,891	44,800	2.22	1:30
July 2019	27,821	18,649	58,879	2.12	1:27
June 2019	30,713	20,378	65,434	2.13	1:19
May 2019	22,546	15,171	50,184	2.27	1:27
April 2019	21,682	9,835	50,265	2.32	1:34
March 2019	18,133	8,395	43,353	2.39	1:40
Feb 2019	19,034	13,083	45,011	2.36	1:36
Jan 2019	25,585	16,481	58,191	2.27	1:26
Dec 2018	18,985	13,284	44,524	2.35	1:26
Nov 2018	14,768	10,616	34,895	2.36	1:30

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Communications Department Report

Submitted to the North Liberty City Council

Nov. 7, 2019, for the month of October 2019

Community Visioning

With the approval of new branding, we've entered a new phase: rolling it out — slowly — on new items that will be in use after Jan. 1 and getting ready to replace it in other spots. As discussed, it will take a while to fully change over, with us looking to implement it in places where we'll get the best bang for our buck and emblazon it on new trucks, uniforms and collateral going forward. We're also working with de Novo staff on production of the video helping to roll this out. Additionally, staff met with Shive-Hattery about their piece of this project with a follow up expected in late November.

Take Flight

A new one-off event, supported by a partnership with the Eastern Iowa Airport, brought huge kites to Centennial Park on Oct. 6. We estimated attendance at 4,000 for the six hours.

Beat the Bitter

Staff has been working to plan the winter games and good cheer event, scheduled Jan. 25 to Feb. 1, 2020, and produce promotion. Changes planned for the cycle's event include programming across two Saturday nights, a single free family-oriented event shifted to Sunday, as well as offering winter games on more than a single day. Registration will open in November, and information is available at beatthebitter.com.

Girls on the Run

Derek has been working on a video with Girls on the Run of Eastern Iowa, a non-profit that "inspire[s] girls to be joyful, healthy and confident using a fun, experience-based curriculum which creatively integrates running," focusing on the organization's Coach of the Year and North Liberty resident Valerie Hoffman. Post-production will begin after Nov. 10's season-ending 5K.

Your Best Lawn

Jillian and Derek continue to work with Stormwater Coordinator Mike Wolfe and our colleagues in Coralville and Iowa City to help produce promotional collateral for the Your Best Lawn program promoting soil quality restoration. The work is funded largely by an Iowa Department of Natural Resources grant.

Pumpkin Display

Jillian collaborated with the Parks Department to host an inaugural community pumpkin display at the Ranshaw House. For relatively little staff time, it was a nice opportunity to bring together the

community to (hopefully) start a new Halloween tradition and bring some attention to the Ranshaw House.

Embody Embrace

We're working with library, recreation and admin staff to organize a new yearly multi-cultural event with a rotating theme. Planned for Jan. 25, 2020, the event's first theme is "celebrating black hair," and will feature a keynote talk, art, workshops and more.

Transit Assistance Program

We're working with administration to produce promotional collateral and digital assets, and other critical pieces for the program's roll out, with registration drives in November at key locations.

Iowa Festival & Events Association

Nick and Jillian attended the inaugural conference for the Iowa Festival & Events Association in Coralville. The conference focused on risk, execution, promotion and other event-related topics.

Returning Citizen Reentry Simulation

We're partnering with Inside Out Reentry Community to offer a simulation to allow attendees to experience life — and its barriers — as ex-offenders on their path to re-establishing themselves as law-abiding, taxpaying citizens. We'll host the simulation with on Monday, Nov. 18, from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Community Center. It is free to register, and space is limited.

Election Information

We published information about filing deadlines and filed candidates, including the League of Women Voters of Johnson County's candidate forum and video statements from the candidates ahead of the local election.

Other Items

We produced City Council meetings and submitted them to the Iowa City government channel.

Staff represented the city in meetings and events with the Iowa City Area Chamber of Commerce, the area Complete Count Committee, Your Best Lawn soil quality restoration campaign, and at the library's Trunk or Treat (we were a roundabout).

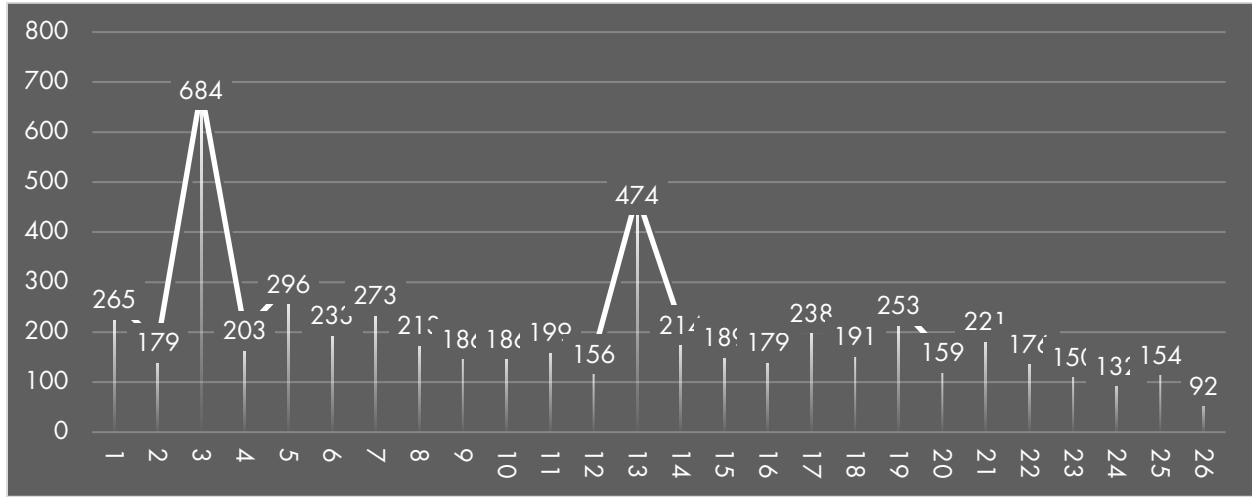
We sent news releases about community events, voting information, recreation programming, the city's new logo and more.

Completed Videos

Title	Requested By	Date Completed	Duration
Take Flight promo	Communications	Oct. 1	0:01
Parks and Recreation	City Administration	Oct. 3	0:40
Eye on North Liberty: Leaves	City Administration	Oct. 2	0:05
Planning and Zoning	City Administration	Oct. 1	0:17
Candidate Statement: Eckhardt	Communications	Oct. 3	0:02
Candidate Statement: Harrington	Communications	Oct. 3	0:03
Candidate Statement: Hoffman	Communications	Oct. 3	0:04
Candidate Statement: Nicholls	Communications	Oct. 3	0:03
Candidate Statement: Smith	Communications	Oct. 3	0:04
Candidate Statement: Wayson	Communications	Oct. 3	0:03
Communication Advisory Commission	City Administration	Oct. 7	0:27
City Council	City Administration	Oct. 8	1:20
Social: Take Flight	Communications	Oct. 8	0:01
Library Board of Trustees	City Administration	Oct. 21	1:03
Social: Waffle Breakfast	Communications	Oct. 11	0:02
Stone Soup Supper	Communications	Oct. 17	0:02
League of Women Voters Candidate Forum	LWVJC	Oct. 17	1:34
City Council	City Administration	Oct. 22	0:52
Transit Advisory Committee	City Administration	Oct. 24	0:37
Complexities of Domestic Violence	City Administration	Oct. 25	1:25
Eye on North Liberty: Code Enforcement	Communications	Oct. 29	0:03
Total completed productions: 21	Duration of new video: 8.9 hours		

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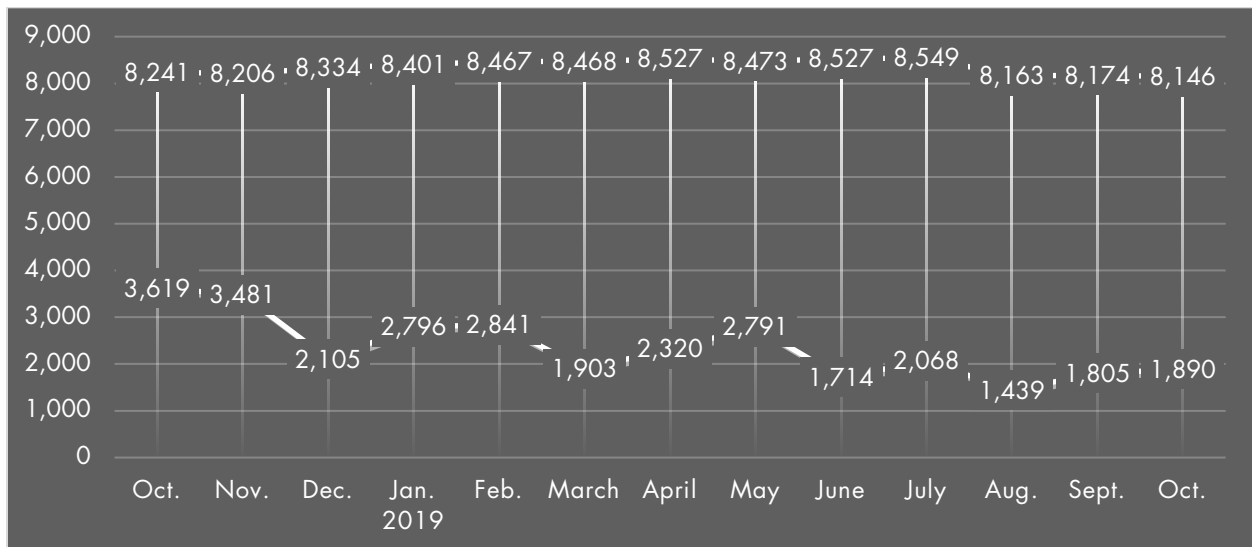


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North Liberty Bulletin

Due to the response to the Nov. 7 edition of the *North Liberty Bulletin* email newsletter, I wanted to provide some background and context, compile the replies this office received from the public, layout how we addressed the situation, and offer the commission an opportunity to comment and ask questions.

On the first Thursday of each month, as you know, we publish an edition of The North Liberty Bulletin, an email newsletter covering items of importance to North Liberty residents, such as holiday hours, community events, behind-the-scenes with city departments and items that require action from residents.

Each edition also includes a signed, first-person note from staff, usually from me, covering a topic important to our community, such as road construction, trash changes and community identity initiatives.

When we conceived of the bulletin, we purposefully included a first-person note because it would allow the note to be more relatable and human. As a local government, we're stereotyped as monolithic, bureaucratic and uncompassionate, and a single person was in a better position to explain and ask for understanding, get excited about things in the community, make tongue-in-cheek jokes or be self-deprecating. (We'd seen similar reactions to our FaceNick video series.) Lighthearted, personal notes also serve to help get folks to pay attention to issues that concern them.

So, following the Nov. 5 election, when voter turn out was again low (Local news coverage led with stories about low voter turnout, including "It's really unfortunate" in the *Press-Citizen's* headline) it became the focus the note in the Nov. 7 edition of *The Bulletin*. In about 250 words, the note pointed out North Liberty's low turnout, thanks folks who ran, congratulated those who won and pointed out the various way folks could have voted.

To produce these emails, I usually layout the basic pieces in the days leading up to its production, and brainstorm with the team the note topic and other issues that warrant inclusion. After it's drafted, it gets read, edited and links are checked by another member of the team. That same process occurred during November's production.

After the *Bulletin*, is sent, we regularly receive a few replies, questions or pieces of feedback.

The email went out just before noon on Nov. 7, and by 12:30 we had received more replies than normal, and while some was positive, there was more that was negative (I've included with this narrative the full comments received in response to the *Bulletin*).

We quickly identified the tone of the message had not been well received and reissued the email around 1 p.m. with the note replaced by an apology, also signed by me. (I also used similar language to reply to those email emailers.)

The city has a vested interest in our community participating through voting and works to inform voters about election and candidates. The failure in the note's tone, unfortunately, was that it distracted from the message of encouraging participation.

The process we have in place is, I believe, enough, when we look at our own work critically, and appropriately balances care with efficiency in our workflow.

Original Note

Hi. Remember that election we had this week?

I bet you didn't vote.

This email goes to about 9,000 people, but only 1,125 North Liberty voters went to the polls and picked city councilors (congratulations, Chris Hoffman, Brent Smith, RaQuishia Harrington and Brian Wayson, on your election, and thank you for running, Matthew Eckhardt and Michael Nicholls, and thank you, 42 anonymous people who were written in, for being written in even if unknowingly) and local school boards.

At least we beat Coralville's 1,089 voters.

I've only been reminding you for two months. It's fine. I know you don't listen to me unless it's a video about changes to the trash collection system.

I get it! We're all busy people! It was really hard to find time since July 8 to ask that a ballot get mailed (literally!) to your house (for free!). Or to find time after Oct. 7 to stop by the county auditor's office. Or to get to a satellite polling location such as the North Liberty Library in the week before Election Day. Or to find time over the 13 hours the polls were open on Nov. 5.

I'm not going to say something like "If you don't vote you can't complain," because you wouldn't listen to me anyway. And I'm always here to listen. But let's do better, OK?

Follow-up Note

Some of you reached out to let me know that I missed the mark on my tone this time around, for which I'm sorry. As one of you suggested, I'll take my own advice and try to do better.

Responses

Suzy Vance, 11:54 a.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Good note. Yes, we voted. I hate videos, written word is better for me.

Thanks for posting this, I cannot understand people in this country not voting.

Ken Pettit, 11:56 a.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Don't assume anything. And yes I did VOTE if it's any of your business

Chris Hunter, 11:59 a.m., Nov. 7, 2019

You can probably keep this post to yourself.

Obviously we are not interested

Brian Engler, 12:21 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I love when unelected bureaucrats send snark filled emails. Maybe time to set aside your self-aggrandizing bullsh!t. Take your own advice and be better.

Karen Scudiero, 12:26 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Shame on you City of North Liberty. This email is disgraceful. No one needs to be voter-shamed.

Helen Littlechild, 12:26 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Our whole family voted! Usually I like your tongue in cheek style Nick, but this was a little much.

Thanks for trying to make the point, but for those who voted you could have thrown in a positive nice comment or two!

Matt McKenna, 12:33 p.m. Nov. 7, 2019

This is incredibly condescending. The city should be ashamed to have their name attached to this. You can not shame people for choosing not to exercise their right to vote. That is un American.

Julie Mesiter, 12:34 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Rude, how about adding a thank you to those of us who DID vote?!

Laura Hover, 12:48 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I get the newsletter because I swim at the Rec Center, but I am actually a Johnson County resident, and I voted! Just up at Swisher, so you can add one to your count. I hope that makes you feel better!

Christine Gaudet, 1:02 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

This is the most self-righteous thing I've heard in a long time. Tone it down a little, buddy

Sarah Alberts, 1:05 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I thought your tone was perfect and necessary.

Angie O'Brien, 1:08 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I don't even live in North Liberty and felt like I was chewed out by an elected official.

Meghan Gatlin, 1:08 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I thought your tone was great the first time.

Angelique Rivera, 1:08 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

This was great. I voted and I agree with you. Voting is our civic duty.

Sorry people who didn't voted tried to make you feel bad for saying the truth.

Big hugs and much respect

Amy Van Epps, 1:11 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

WOW-This is absolutely rude, inappropriate and uncalled for.

Who the hell are you to speak to the residents of North Liberty this way?

It is MY choice and the choice of every single US citizen to vote or not vote. One of the many freedoms we have in this country.

I would recommend a public apology.

Donna Wong-Gibbons, 1:15 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

For what it's worth, I thought you were spot on the first time about the elections. It is a freedom and responsibility that far too many take for granted and voting matters! Plus, it's not like you were wrong about all the opportunities people had to vote.

Anyway, I enjoy the Bulletins and find them full of useful and entertaining information.

Thanks for all your hard work!

Dick Hakes, 1:25 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Ah, don't take it too hard. I get pissed off also when people don't take their God-given right to vote seriously.

Yeah, you were a little snippish. It's happened to me before. Best policy, vent it out in print, then let it sit overnight and look at it with fresh eyes in the morning before you click that button. I've saved my own bacon a couple of times that way over lo these many, many, many years!

Anna Poulter-Hendrickson, 1:25 p.m.

I thought the original was great. Totally what needs to be said.

Jon Groves, 1:29 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I loved the first email

Anderson Family, 1:30 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Hi Nick! I personally, loved your comm - its so true! If people are mad, its because they are defensive because they know they are right. Dont be so quick to apologize, the truth hurts :)

Annette Niebuhr, 1:30 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I'm sure you had your reasons for writing what you did the first time. Doing what you do is often thankless I'm sure. And residents obviously take for granted the fact that North Liberty is taking care of them. I didn't vote so I'm in that bunch and I apologize. I hesitate to vote when I haven't kept up on information about candidates but I will try to do better because I think North Liberty is a great place to live.

One thing I will mention is that ~part of my neglect is due to my perception of NL events and information focusing mostly on families, and I am a single middle aged woman with no kids. I will also hazard a (snarky) guess that it was probably a lot of those "busy busy busy" family people who didn't vote, and who (in my view) benefit most from your policies and efforts.

ANYway -

Thanks for listening and THANKS FOR ALL YOU DO to make this a great place!!

Josh Wachendorf, 1:31 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I think your tone/frustration was spot on! I always enjoy this newsletter, please don't change it.

Dusty Brown, 1:34 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

People that complained about the first newsletter are those exact people that should heed your message. I appreciate your candor and people need to be called out for something as important as voting. I didn't vote, and you are exactly right, it's very easy to vote and I took your message as constructive challenge.

Paul Hanson, 1:34 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

My reaction:

Are you kidding me?!? There was not a single false word in what you wrote in your analysis of the voter turnout! People didn't go vote! That's bad! I admit I didn't go vote because by the time I remembered to do so, I was on my way back from a jam session in a basement in CR and the polls were closed. Because of your previous email, I am actually more likely to vote in a non-presidential election year... just so you know.....

I have experience with the wrath of "the public" from writing CD & music reviews for dailyvault.com. A really good example is when, in 2003, Metallica released an album, called St. Anger, which "the public" didn't like. I did. "The public" decided it was wrong to like a Metallica album because when the tunes didn't have guitar solos, did have a different guitar sound, and did have more than 1 riff in the tune. At the time when I wrote that review, I was 14 years into Metallica being my favorite band and their 1989 album, And Justice for All, being my all-time favorite album, which meant that I couldn't be a true Metallica fan because "the public" declared many years ago that Master of Puppets was their best album. But, to me, St. Anger resonated with me because it reminded me a lot of what I loved about And Justice for All, which was the interaction between Hetfield's rhythm guitar & Ulrich's drums. That's why I loved St. Anger. To those who

told me I was "wrong" for loving St. Anger, I just had to accept that their opinion was wrong.
<GRIN>

I also like to share the story that, for one website, I used sarcasm to open a review of a Fear Factory album and that was not well-received by "the public." One member of the public declared that I had no right to write about Fear Factory (a heavy metal band) because how could any writer with the last name of "Hanson" know anything about good music?!? That really made me chuckle ... <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NHoznOYXAeE>

All that leads to me telling you that I'm sorry that you got called out on the carpet for your St. Anger release - I thought it was great...

Annelise Jacobson, 1:43 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Pretty sure someone whose job is communications should know this is poor way to talk to people. This reads like a rant you give at a shitty bar after your third beer.

I thought about unsubscribing, but then how would I hear about changes to the trash collection system?

Brodie Campbell, 1:46 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I thought it was entertaining...

Wayne Heffner, 1:53 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Wow!! It's the job of city government communicators to shame people?!?Hey, a piece of relevant info here: I'm one of the 9,000 who recieved this email - - but I live OUTSIDE the city limits. So yes, I voted - but not for NL officials. That would be unlawful (and truly shame worthy).

Wayne Johnson, 1:54 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I DO read your bulletins--and in fact, wish you would write many more of them. No one's perfect. It's very difficult to convey TONE in a written message--- I get in trouble with that all the time. I think that's why YouTube is so successful--- great place to share information--- and make jokes on camera--- without everyone misunderstanding you all the time.....

Shannon Knipfer, 1:55 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I understand your frustration regarding our low voting turn out, but perhaps it's not the greatest idea to publicly shame your city through your North Liberty Bulletin. With so much negativity being thrown around on social media and in general interactions with people, we need to appreciate each others' efforts. Your letter is dripping with condescension and negative sarcasm, it makes me want to unsubscribe from future communications.

I realize you feel unheard. Maybe you can take a look at how information has been communicated. The public do enjoy those fun videos - they share and "like" and remember. Maybe the voting material - who's who and what they stand for - can be conveyed through "fun"

videos. I know this is serious business, but you have to know your audience; and, like it or not, create material that will appeal to and REACH them.

To be honest, I completely forgot about it until day-of when I was blasted by all directions saying it was Voting Day!. The problem for me, was that I didn't know the candidates and therefore felt I couldn't make an educated choice. I hadn't seen pictures, videos, or links to "who we are" pages for the last 6 months or even the last two weeks. If they came in a monthly email from the city containing other news items, it was forgotten right after I read it. Yes, we're a society that needs to be constantly reminded of things because we are constantly bombarded by schools, friends, companies, strangers vying for our attention. It's not ideal, I agree; but this is the world we live in, and information from our city needs to be presented in ways that the community can quickly and easily find, understand, and support.

Mary Unga-Sogaard, 1:58 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I thought it was great - !

Judy Bornkessel, 1:58 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Nick, I think you were right on point. I appreciated your comments. Thank you for speaking out. Obviously you caught someone's attention.

Travis Nitcher, 2:16 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I'm sure you had good intentions by sending out your previous e-mail. I'd like to share first of all my wife and I did vote. We did this without prompting from you or any candidate or political motivated person/organizations. However, I do find it troubling that as a city employee, you have time to send and receive e-mails that may not necessarily be part of your job description. Political affiliation doesn't matter much in whatever you may have been trying to promote. It's just not something you should be using city time, equipment and or facilities to communicate your intentions or your opinion about who or why people did or did not vote.

We have enough political bias from too many people in our communities and in this world today and to have one more person sending out e-mails telling us what to do. In the future, I would recommend trying something different than how you have used the system to get your point across.

In the future, I would also suggest, keeping your communication focused on the good reminders, city happenings, and many other items going on in the city. Leave out the politics. There's already plenty of that coming from too many other sources and duplicating reminders and chastising folks for not doing what you want, when you want is just not proper.

Jaron Lassen, 2:24 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I read your message in the bulletin this morning, laughed, cursed myself for being part of the problem, and resolved to do better next time. I just read your update and wanted to say I'm sorry

you have to deal with the vitriol you undoubtedly have slung at you in your position. I thought your message this morning was spot on and I sincerely appreciate the candor. Keep up the good work!

Angela Bulman, 2:33 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I personally liked your first email better. If people are upset its because they feel guilty about neglecting their civic duty.

Yasmin Rezai, 2:54 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Your tone was great! Made me smile.

Dana Van Abbema, 2:58 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Hmmmmm... yeah, tone could have maybe been tweaked, but I think it's important to call people out on this. Thanks for sending it.

Christine Douglas, 3:06 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I LOVED your message!!!

It's the absolute truth - and if they don't like it - stop complaining and get out the vote!

Sharon Keating, 3:12 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I'm glad to see you recanted your original email and offered an apology.

I was going to sit on the original email and stop in tomorrow to speak to you in person. It's obvious you're very passionate about elections and your job and want the best for the citizens of North Liberty.

I'm not going to tell you what you most likely have heard from others today about the condescending tone of your email. We all make mistakes and hopefully this was a learning moment for you.

I'm proud to live in North Liberty, however, I would appreciate in the future you keep those type of thoughts and comments to yourself. That's not how you motivate people to change.

Karla Tonella, 3:39 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Thanks to your reminder I voted!! as it happens my favorite candidates all won too.

I thought your email was fine – refreshing. I enjoy your wit.

Jill Daly, 3:42 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I think your email was just fine - and I'm guessing anyone who was upset by it was embarrassed that they didn't vote.

Jedda Newton, 3:46 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

This is great! So true! We need to better. Thanks for helping us along!

Katie Lewis, 3:56 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Advise [sic] from someone studying communications:

I was in disbelief when I read your email. You are probably tired of getting these response emails but you did send out an unprofessional email that needs to be addressed.

Instead of pointing fingers and getting angry maybe try to find solutions. Why didn't people vote? I personally had no clue it was going on. I looked back at my emails and saw nothing from you or North Liberty about this election. So, is that my fault or the communications department?

I am not sure what your background is in communication but in almost every class I have taken in communication (rhetoric, leadership, group, interpersonal, etc.) your email would have been a great example of what NOT to do. When your message is hostile, aggressive, and accusatory, the listeners are not going to take anything you are saying seriously. The goal in your message/discourse was to get more people to vote and talk about the election but all I am hearing about is your email. To get a message across to a large group you need to connect. They need to know that they can trust you and what you are saying.

I hope you can take this and what others are saying to heart and work on improvement.

Erin Payne-Christiansen, 3:58 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Gosh, I hope this gets to Nick...

I know it's hard for folks to take constructive criticism, but very few of us are perfect. Sounds like you got some criticism; I'm sure sorry not everyone can take it as well as you. I thought your message was appropriate. I've appreciated the humanism you display in your communication, & I hope you'll keep it up. Thanks for the job you do. It is appreciated.

James Schafer, 4:40 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I thought the first one was perfect. Only people complaining were probably people who didn't vote.

Catherine Kearns, 5:00 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Do Not Apologize. I thought your honesty was amazing and you're exactly correct if they don't VOTE they have no right to complain! I'm new to North Liberty but I plan on being one of the voters in the future! You did not miss the mark you are spot on!!!

Jacob Adams, 5:49 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Haha, I loved it. I've always enjoyed your newsletters. Please don't change and start writing boring PC newsletters that everyone deletes. Keep it coming!

Jill Lindley, 6:04 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Absolutely no complaints regarding your tone. You were spot on. Maybe next time they'll take 5 minutes out of their day to vote.

Steve Gallagher, 6:37 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I was voter #21 at Garner School.

When I read your voter feedback in the previous email, I thought to myself that you might hear back from a few folks.

You evidently did, huh?

I would imagine that readers responses varied in direct relation to the amount of guilt that they felt, knowing that you were sharing a valid observation. If the general election, one year from now, doesn't break all-time records for participation then we all deserve what we get.

However, taking the school board/city council election as a litmus test, people kind of don't give a shit about local issues. I'm guilty as the next for having missed my share of off year elections.

I sent an email to our Secretary of State, Paul Pate, congratulating himself in the Gazette guest editorial (remind you of someone?) and his party for "making voting easier for everybody." This, after states all over the country, Iowa included, are making voter access less convenient, more laborious, less accessible, and more complicated.

The stakes have never been higher for voters.

To summarize, I felt that your gentle nudge to NL voters was not out of line. I knew you'd get called on it.

I'd like to compliment you and thank you for the thorough and entertaining job you've done of keeping citizens aware of construction project progress, community news, and seasonal updates. I, for one, have enjoyed seeing your sense of humor come through in your communications.

I've had a 52317 zip code since 1981. You, and the city staff and departments do an outstanding job. Thank you for your efforts!

Don Howard, 6:49 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

I read your email and agree 100%. While I did vote, I should have done more to research the candidates and encourage others to vote. It is unfortunate that some did not appreciate it as much as I did. Please continue your effort to change the culture and making a difference!

Brad Franzwa, 7:13 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

At first I thought, "Wow how drunk was he when he sent this???" until I saw that it was timestamped in the morning. Perhaps still drunk?

As a communications director and the voice of the City, I would expect you to have some tact with communications. Any marketing or communications student would have probably reminded

you to go ahead and draft a message like that. Perhaps send it to some trusted friends. But after the draft to everyone in the city, you should delete it, not actually send it! Because all you did was piss off 9,000 people who didn't vote and probably half of those 1,125 that actually did. You know, the 10,125 people you should be thankful for with each and every check you receive as compensation for your services.

I've put up with your childish videos and folksy communications because I thought perhaps many people enjoyed your "small-town" or informal approach. But this is a big downward turn for our city's communications office. Before criticizing the voting records of those paying for your sweet job with the city, perhaps review your own voting records and prove that you have voted in every election since you turned 18. Can you do it? Instead of crafting communications to encourage voting, you instead chose to exhibit contempt and insults that actually discourages involvement in city affairs. On top of that, it was simply unprofessional.

As far as city leaders, this would be a decent time for them to consider your employment as the voice of the city. Perhaps a closed session for our elected officials discussing a week off without pay for you could help you remember your role in the city. Perhaps they should designate a trusted staffer to review any new communications you desire to send out city-wide. At a very minimum, I hope you reconsider the "send" button the next time you want to draft hate mail that comes officially from "The City of North Liberty."

Eric Ruttum, 8:50 p.m., Nov. 7, 2019

Way to go pissing off the people who can't vote! Just kidding! Personally I loved your first email today. It made me laugh. Please keep up the great communications work.

Nichole Malin, 7:54 a.m. Nov. 8, 2019

I thought your tone was just fine!

Brittany Robinson, 7:56 a.m., Nov. 8, 2019

I am writing in regards to the North Liberty bulletin sent out this week. I am proud to be one of the 1125 citizens of North Liberty who voted but found the latest communication in the North Liberty bulletin polarizing and condescending. As the bulletin is an official means of communication between the city and residents of North Liberty, I strongly feel it should be a platform from which messages are conveyed with a basic level of professionalism and respect. Messages don't have to include finger pointing to be powerful!

Low voter turnout is just one symptom of low civic engagement. I would urge you to start a dialog with residents on why voting wasn't a priority to help change the situation for the next election, and to learn how other cities have been successful in engaging their residents. Let's keep things positive!

Mary Chen Schroeder, 8:02 a.m., Nov. 8, 2019

I thought your email yesterday regarding civic duty was spot on. I appreciated your candor and insight, even if it made me (and I'm sure others) feel embarrassed and uncomfortable. Along with righteous indignation, it took courage to call out a whole city.

As residents/citizens, we have been given the privilege of political and social engagement. Indeed others have fought and died to provide and protect that right. As you pointed out, this privilege (what should be a happy obligation) comes to us at the mere cost of minor inconvenience.

Your message transcends city lines and it **should** have been expressed, perhaps even more so given the response you likely received.

Memo

To Ryan Heiar, Tracey Mulcahey
From Communication Director Nick Bergus
Date November 15, 2019
Re FY 2021 Communications Budget Proposal

Attached is the proposed budget for the Communications Department for the Fiscal Year 2021, beginning July 1, 2020, as well as five-year capital improvements.

Under Personnel, outside of costs related to cost-of-living and merit increases, I'm requesting an increase to Group Insurance Deductible, to \$6,000, which has seen increased costs in reason years, and I would expect to continue to increase with continued changes to staff's family makeup.

Additionally, I'm proposing a new full-time position, **Community Center Engagement Coordinator**, focused on programming collaboration and coordination throughout the Community Center, particularly building relationships with underserved populations, starting partway through FY2021. While we work on a detailed job description with significant input from recreation and library, we envision the areas of responsibility to include:

Community Center-wide programming: Programs like the upcoming Embrace | Embody can make a bigger impact if they're collaborative among various departments. Other programs that might fall under or be part of this role include the annual Trunk or Treat, Halloween and Christmas programming. In short, it would be a high priority for this role to coordinate programming that collaborates with recreation and library staff to make better use of the Community Center's strengths and skills.

Senior programming: This has been identified as a need that clearly crosses departmental boundaries. While it is currently coordinated by Special Projects Coordinator McConville, coordination by an on-site position could be more efficient and free up time for other projects.

Underserved populations: We've worked on some programs and tried to incorporate better service into our routine, but a role focused on making sure our Community Center benefits our entire community, both by collaborating to improve current programming, providing tools and support to staff across departments and offering new programs or initiatives.

Community Center communication: This role would spend time "embedded" with recreation and library departments to help improve internal and external communications. A major task, for example, would be helping recreation staff prioritize messaging, while a second would be the planned unification of Community Center departments programming guides, which will require additional coordination and, potentially, frequency.

Under Services & Commodities, I am not proposing any funding for new initiatives, but am requesting increases in three areas.

- \$1,100** **Records Retention:** We first implemented a records retention service in 2018 to comply with records requests and as a safeguard against user-deleted content on social media networks. Our use of these services has increased to the point that we require the next level of service.
- \$2,000** **Community Events:** Our initial goal was to use this to provide new programming, but after further internal discussions, it made more sense to use this funding to make programs we already offer more accessible. We discovered, for instance, there are seniors who take turns attending the weekly Senior Connection Lunch because the cost, even at just \$5 a lunch, is prohibitive for them to attend together. Starting in January, we will provide a limited number of free meals to seniors identified by the North Liberty Community Pantry, in concert with the city's transportation assistance. The current fiscal year's funding is estimated to cover 6 months of access, and, if successful, we would like to continue to offer this into the next fiscal year.
- \$2,000** **Outreach:** We delayed on production of our welcome packets, targeted at renters and non-English speakers, while we updated the city identity and branding and will produce a round in the spring. Additionally, we'd like to produce a wider mailing of them in the fall of 202 with some additional funds for other translation and digital marketing services.

Capital Projects

These are included in the spreadsheet as well as detailed below.

Fiscal Year 2021

- \$10,000** **Network Attached Storage:** Adds additional storage and off-site redundancy for the communications shared media archive for raw video, photos and other files. Loss of this data, due to hardware failure, fire or disaster, would be irreplaceable and devastating to our work.
- \$1,500** **Laptop Replacement:** Replaces a laptop and docking station.
- \$3,200** **Wireless audio package:** Adds microphones and receivers that better equip us to cover author visits, panels, performances and other city and community events.
- \$5,000** **Branding Implementation:** Funding for a round of collateral replacement with new branding.

Fiscal Year 2022

\$5,000 **Branding Implementation:** Funding for a round of collateral replacement with new branding.

\$12,000 **HD Camera and Tripod Replacement:** Replaces an HD video camera and tripod.

Fiscal Year 2023

\$5,000 **DLSR Replacement:** Replaces a digital still camera.

\$12,000 **Workstation Upgrades:** Replacing workstations, with upgraded technology to keep pace with the demands of video, audio and photo production.

\$12,000 **HD Camera Replacement:** Replaces second HD video camera and tripod.

Fiscal Year 2024

\$5,000 **DLSR Replacement:** Replaces a digital still camera.

\$2,000 **Laptop Replacement:** Replaces a laptop and docking station.

Fiscal Year 2025

\$20,000 **Digital Signage Replacement:** Replaces monitors, other hardware and software used for internal digital signage.

	FY 17-18	FY 18-19	FY 19-20	FY 20-21
Regular Salaries and Wages	\$ 171,853	\$ 175,323	\$ 187,188	
Part-Time & Temporary Wages	\$ 10,000	\$ 16,860	\$ 16,900	
Overtime Pay	\$ 100	\$ 100	\$ 100	
FICA/Medicare	\$ 13,907	\$ 14,702	\$ 15,643	
IPERS	\$ 16,234	\$ 18,142	\$ 19,266	
Group Insurance	\$ 35,111	\$ 36,211	\$ 37,903	
Worker's Comp	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,600	\$ 1,680
Uniforms	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Mileage	\$ 100	\$ 100	\$ 100	\$ 100
Group Insurance Deductable	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 6,000
Training and Conferences	\$ 4,500	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000	\$ 6,000
Total Personnel	\$ 256,405	\$ 272,038	\$ 284,446	\$ 13,780
Production Equipment Repair	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500	\$ 500
Insurance/General	\$ 3,240	\$ 3,240	\$ 3,240	\$ 3,402
Legal Fees	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Immunization & Testing	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 200	\$ 200
Telephone & Cell Communication	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
Web Hosting Contract	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
On Demand/Streaming Support	\$ 4,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
Mobile Access	\$ 1,200	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Digital Communications Support		\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500
Software Support	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
Computers and Technology	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ 4,500	\$ 4,500
Telecommunications Supplies	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
Telecommunications Equipment	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000
Record Retention	\$ -	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 3,600
Underserved Population Outreach	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ 4,000
Community Events	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 2,000	\$ 4,000
Public Input Services	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 7,000	\$ 7,000
Total Services & Commodities	\$ 32,140	\$ 34,940	\$ 47,440	\$ 52,702
Total Budget	\$ 288,545	\$ 306,978	\$ 331,886	\$ 66,482