

CITYnews



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MAY/JUNE 2021

Farber Elected Ward One Representative

Susan R. Farber was elected as the First Ward representative on the City Council in a special election on March 3 and was sworn into office on March 8.

Susan is a native of Dubuque and serves as a board member for Dubuque Initiatives, UnityPoint Finley Hospital, Heritage Works, and the University of Dubuque.

She and her husband, Dr. Bernie Saks, own Magoo's Pizza. Her previous professional experience includes multiple executive roles at national and international telecommunication companies. Susan holds an undergraduate degree from

Georgetown University, a master's degree in business administration from George Washington University, and attended the AMP Executive MBA Program at Harvard Business School.



She can be reached at 563.690.6505 and sfarber@cityofdubuque.org. She resides at 1755 Overview Ct. with her husband. §

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New Aid Program for Renters and Homeowners Impacted by COVID-19

Through funding from the American Rescue Plan Act, the Iowa Finance Authority's new Iowa Rent & Utility Assistance Program can help eligible renters impacted by COVID-19 receive rent assistance, utility bill assistance, or both. Homeowners impacted by COVID-19 may also qualify for utility bill assistance, as well as foreclosure prevention.

The City of Dubuque encourages residents financially impacted by COVID-19 to consider applying for this assistance. For eligibility details and more information, or to apply, visit iowahousingrecovery.com or call 855-300-5885. §

Police Department Launches Residential Surveillance System Registration Program

The Dubuque Police Department has launched Secure Dubuque, a community partnership program that encourages residents to register their home surveillance system with the police department. In the event a crime occurs in the area, footage from the system could be of assistance to the department, increasing the efficiency of the investigation. Personal surveillance systems can include security cameras and doorbell cameras.

After registering a system, the resident's contact information is added to a database maintained by the police department. If criminal activity occurs in the area, the police department will determine if a residential surveillance system may have



A public safety initiative of the Dubuque Police Department



picked something up on video, and may contact the resident. Residents reserve the right to decline access to their system at any time. Information contained within the registration database is not available to the public.

For additional information and to register a system, visit www.cityofdubuque.org/securedubuque or call the Dubuque Police Department at 563-589-4410. §

Dubuque Offers New Financial Incentives to Landlords

The City of Dubuque Housing & Community Development Department is offering new financial incentives to landlords who partner with the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program. Incentives will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis until the program funds are depleted.

First-Time Unit Bonus

The landlord will receive \$1,000 per unit for first-time HCV units or for units that have not accepted an HCV payment since January 1, 2012. Eligible units must be located within city limits in census tracts 8.01, 8.02, 9, 11.01, 12.04, 12.05, 101.01, 101.03, 101.04, **or** have three or more bedrooms (in any part of the city.)

No-Loss Vacant Unit Bonus

The landlord may receive up to one month's worth of rent as an incentive to keep a unit vacant to allow time for the incoming HCV tenant to lease-up.

The landlord must inform the City's Housing Department when a unit is vacant and must be advertised as HCV accepted. The program requires a 12-month lease and contract to be signed. Payments will be made with the first HCV monthly payment.

Damage Reimbursement Program

This program offers landlords up to \$2,500 per unit for damage reimbursement if the damage exceeds the paid deposit for the assisted unit. To be eligible, the unit must be located in the city of Dubuque or Dubuque County, have a signed lease on or after April 1, 2021, and received assistance through the City of Dubuque, ECIA, Catholic Charities, or HACAP.

For additional details, eligibility criteria, and to apply, visit www.cityofdubuque.org/landlordincentives. Call 563.580.8667 or email go@cityofdubuque.org with questions or for more information on these programs. §

Heat Source and Water Heater Replacement Program for Homeowners and Tenants

This program provides material cost reimbursements of up to \$3,500 for heat sources and \$1,500 for water heaters. It is available to income-eligible homeowners and tenants who meet program criteria. Information and eligibility guidelines are available at www.cityofdubuque.org/714 or by calling 563.589.4239. §

Lester Named Water Department Manager



City Manager Mike Van Milligen has appointed Christopher Lester as Dubuque's next water department manager, effective June 1, 2021.

As water department manager, Lester will manage the operation and maintenance of the City's water treatment facility, water distribution system, and its associated pump stations, water reservoirs, and wells and will ensure compliance with applicable state and federal regulations, including Federal Safe Drinking Water Act regulations.

Lester is a water and wastewater professional with over 22 years of work experience in the water and wastewater industries and is certified by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

He has served as the City of Dubuque's community development specialist in the Housing and Community Development Department since July 2019, managing the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, maintaining compliance with Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations, and managing grant and loan compliance agreement. Prior to that position, Lester worked as a plant operator at the City of Dubuque Water and Resource Recovery Center from 2008 to 2019.

Lester holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from the University of Dubuque where he is currently pursuing a master of business administration.

Asphalt Overlay Program Gets Boost

Due, in part, to funding from the American Rescue Plan, the City's annual asphalt overlay program will be expanded from five miles to 10 miles of city streets for this year.

The asphalt overlay program is an annual program targeting city streets in need of repaving. It improves rideability, surface structure, and longevity of the asphalt streets without being assessed back to homeowners or businesses benefiting the most from the overlay. ADA accessible ramps will also be reconstructed as part of the project.

For a complete list of the streets planned for the program this year, visit www.cityofdubuque.org/asphaltoverlay or call 563-589-4250. §



**Your loved ones
need you.**

**Get the
COVID-19 vaccine
when you can.**



**dubuquecounty.org/sleevesup
563-690-MAKE**



STATE OF THE CITY

Mayor Roy D. Buol Spring 2021

Around this time last year, every conceivable thing about life as we knew it changed and became more dangerous and complicated. A year ago, we were alarmed at the first COVID-19 cases and deaths in our county. As of April 1, 2021, nearly 13,000 county residents have been diagnosed with COVID and, tragically, over 200 citizens have died. Significant challenges remain, yet we have the ability to move toward recovery, reopening, and renewal.

The quickest path to the recovery and reopening of our community lies in vaccinations and doing our part to create herd immunity. Please watch for updates on vaccine availability and consider helping others to both make and get to appointments. We ALL want to return to living life with extended family, friends, and colleagues. We ALL want to support our local economy and small businesses. We ALL want to attend events, enjoy activities, and watch our kids and grandkids perform. The reality of life in our “new normal” is that the only way to ensure the treasured outcomes we ALL want is to reach “herd immunity” through vaccinations.

Fortunately, the City entered this pandemic in a strong financial position with healthy general fund reserves to allow for unforeseen expenses. The goal has been to have at least a 20% general fund reserve and, in fiscal year (FY) 2022, the City will have nearly 25%, or nearly \$18 million. The City's strategic use of debt provides the

capacity to withstand a crisis that might require significant investments. In FY2022, Dubuque will be using just 45% of the statutory debt limit, which ranks Dubuque as the fifth lowest of the 11 largest Iowa cities.

Recently, your City Council unanimously adopted the FY2022 budget, which takes effect July 1. It lowers the property tax rate by 2.51%, giving the City of Dubuque the second lowest property tax rate of the 11 largest cities in Iowa. The highest tax rate (Waterloo) is 95% higher, and the average is 51% higher than Dubuque's. This also gives Dubuque the lowest property taxes per capita compared to those 11 cities. The highest city (West Des Moines) is 157% higher than Dubuque's taxes per capita, and the average is 82% higher than Dubuque. Combined with minor increases to utility rates and fees, the budget for the next fiscal year minimizes costs to residents and businesses while ensuring efficient delivery of critical city services.

Additionally, the City of Dubuque is projected to receive \$27.43 million from President Biden's *American Rescue Plan*, with 50% received by June and the remaining 50% within 12 months. The funds are expected to be limited to the following: assistance to impacted individuals and households, private businesses, tourism, travel, hospitality, and non-profits; reimbursement for lost revenues to the City; and necessary investments in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure.

With this *American Rescue Plan* funding, the City will be able to avoid budget cuts and employee layoffs and remove the freeze on vacant City positions, equipment purchases, maintenance projects, travel and training, and capital projects. Planned infrastructure improvements include resurfacing 10 miles of city streets in the next fiscal year – double the normal average of five miles per year!

Spring is our time for renewal. When we can gather again, and reflect on the unforgettable year behind us, it is incumbent upon us as a nation to remember lessons learned that require resolution such as the inequalities in medical care for our most vulnerable and minority populations, the racism and gun violence showing us the darkest parts of human nature, and more.

We, too, must honor the best in humanity, like our medical, police and fire professionals on the frontlines working tirelessly to save lives and our essential workers helping to keep our economy moving. Clearly, this pandemic showed us deficiencies, but it also showed us how precious our time together truly is.

Our City's vision, with its budget focus, is on the right path. The personal path to renewal, through vaccinations and herd immunity, is before us. It's up to you. §



Art on the River Returns

The City of Dubuque's rotating public sculpture program, Art on the River, returns this summer with a call for sculpture proposals to be released on or before April 15 and the new exhibition's opening reception set for Friday, Aug. 6. More information is available at cityofdubuque.org/arttontheriver §

New Faces & Retirements

The City of Dubuque welcomes these new employees:

Michael Belmont - Housing & Comm. Development

Teri Goodman - City Manager's Office

James Brosius - Public Works

Cory Gotherman - Public Works

Sharon Daly - Library

Rick Hayes - Airport

Susan Farber - City Council

Joni Medinger - Legal

Lucas Gonyier - Housing & Comm. Development

Hunter Smith - Finance

Shawn Stoffel - Public Works

The City of Dubuque congratulates these recent retirees:

Mark Burkle - Fire

Jim Powers - Public Works

Kevin Grace - Parks

Robert Rehfeldt - Fire

Richard Grothe - Water

Tracey Stecklein - Legal

Al Hakansan - Public Works

Rebecca Steiber - Police

Steve Horch - Water

Gordy Vetsch - Airport

Tom Osterhoff - Public Works

CALENDAR

May

3 City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m., virtual meeting*

17 City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m., virtual meeting*

31 City offices closed for Memorial Day. Curbside collection on Sat., May 29.

June

7 City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m., virtual meeting*

21 City Council Meeting, 6:30 p.m., virtual meeting*

*At time of publication, all public meetings are being held virtually to abide by social distancing guidelines. For details on participating in these virtual meetings, visit cityofdubuque.org/agendas or call 563.589.4120. City Council meetings are City Council meeting are aired live on CityChannel Dubuque (Mediacom channels 8 and 117.2) and streamed live and archived on the City's website at www.cityofdubuque.org/media, and streamed live on the City's Facebook page at www.facebook.com/cityofdubuque.

This calendar does not include all events and is subject to change. Sign up for Dubuque's "Notify Me" e-mail/text alert system at www.cityofdubuque.org/notifyme to receive agendas, news releases, event notifications, and other timely news.

Household Hazardous Waste and Electronics Recycling Available by Appointment

The Dubuque Metropolitan Area Solid Waste Agency (DMASWA) provides proper disposal of household hazardous wastes and electronics recycling to residents of Dubuque and Delaware counties. Appointments are required. Make an appointment at www.dmaswa.org (preferred) or call 563-557-8220.

Examples of household hazardous waste includes: household cleaners, weed and feed fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides such as roach and ant sprays, mole killer, mouse poisons, and flying insect sprays, lawn and garden products, paints and stains, brake and transmission fluids, and much more.

For a complete list of acceptable items, visit www.dmaswa.org. §

Applications Open for Arts and Culture Operating Support & Special Projects Grants

The City is currently accepting applications for both the Operating Support and Special Projects Arts & Culture grant programs.

Operating Support grants offer limited, unrestricted support to established 501(c)(3) arts and culture organizations operating within Dubuque city limits that demonstrate a commitment to serving the community by offering arts, arts education, and cultural heritage programs. Through this support, the City of Dubuque increases the community's access to a wide range of diverse arts and culture experiences to foster economic activity, promote citizen engagement, and cultivate an equitable community of choice. Operating Support grant applications are due by 11:59 p.m. on Monday, May 17.

The Special Projects grant program is designed to provide funding that cultivates unique and innovative creative arts and culture experiences that prioritize community engagement and active partnership in which all parties may experience change and growth. Successful Special Projects proposals must incorporate DEI planning and practices into the development and execution of the project. Special Projects grant applications due by 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, June 1.

Full details are available at www.cityofdubuque.org/artsandculture or by calling 563.690.6059. §

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The City of Dubuque welcomes comments and suggestions about your city government or news appearing in this newsletter. Please contact:

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