

Stephanie Hirsch

From: Stephanie Hirsch
Sent: Monday, December 26, 2022 10:28 AM
To: CityCouncil
Cc: Billie Hufford; David Solberg; Tess Morgan; Nicholas Koerner
Subject: Update to City Council - Happy Holidays and Thank You!

Hello City Council Members -

I don't have a full-length update this week, but wanted to send a holiday greeting and appreciation.

First, take a minute to watch a winter song performed by City staff: Watch the video here: <https://youtu.be/JOnmedS19Q4> The song is dedicated to all of our staff who have been out front in dealing with the storm this past week and who will keep us safe all winter.



Next, I want you to know that I am grateful for all of you. You take your job seriously, and you do the difficult work with thought and deliberation, considering the perspectives and needs of all the different people who make up our community of 72,607 residents.

A special thank you to the Council Members who worked at Haven House this weekend. Logistics permitted these folks to help: Terry, Jill, Andrew, and Joshua (plus Jessica!). Andrew is pictured here vacuuming at the end of the day. A huge thank you to Billie Hufford who has been working around the clock to get enough staff and volunteers to keep the doors open, and working at Haven House herself. Additional City staff -- including employees of Community Services who have already worked many extra hours this week clearing snow -- worked at Haven House as well. At least 20 people stepped up to help. We look forward to debriefing about your experiences, as we think about how to tackle issues related to housing, both in terms of social service networks and in terms of housing supply.



Walking to the Haven House, I looked down streets that were plowed carefully and thoroughly, allowing for safe passage of all, including emergency vehicles. While at the Haven House, we called 911 to for someone with an uncontrolled nosebleed. I spoke with the responding paramedic team, and a young paramedic/firefighter said that they were one of the crews who responded to the fatal accident on I-94 on December 21st. The paramedic said that their team worked as hard as they could to give the young mother the best possible chance to survive and that they was very sorry that she didn't make it. When I asked if they were off for the holidays, the paramedic said that flu has been going around the station, and that they might be ordered back in to serve. It was a reminder to me that people who do the City's work have different tools to help, and they have different experiences and challenges. I am grateful for how the work of each part of our City adds up to the whole.



I read a Facebook post from someone who felt hopeless about the challenges we face as a city. I reflected that some people may be able to sleep well by shutting out the news. Others want to do more, but don't know how to help, and this keeps them up at night. And we are in the unique position that we pay close attention AND have some tools to make a difference. The work will be fraught, and we won't always get it right. We won't always agree on which need takes priority, given very limited resources. When we do agree on priorities, we might not agree on the strategies. But, we have the incredible honor and responsibility to use the tools and resources of municipal government – from snow plows to ambulances, from zoning to organizing -- to try our hardest to give our residents the best possible chances to thrive.

As we head into 2023, we can resolve to continue to try our hardest and take chances, to appreciate the contributions of all different types of service and the perspectives of all of our 72,607 different residents, to take breaks for hobbies/friends/family/sleep, and to wake up ready to try again the next day. In a world with so much need, I'm happy and honored to do the work ahead with all of you.

Stephanie

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