



# TOWNtalk

NEWSLETTER FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL  
VOLUME 19 ISSUE 1 • NOVEMBER 2022

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## On the Front Burner



### Building a Complete Community

As many of you know, issues related to growth and development in Chapel Hill have dominated the discussions here in town for many years. How much to grow and where are critically important issues that the Town Council, our organization, and the community are currently engaged in. The decisions associated with this debate will guide Chapel Hill for many years to come. They will also have an impact on all of us.

The Triangle is growing quickly. We live in one of the fastest growing regions in the nation, and it's not anticipated to slow down any time soon. Our goal is to grow in a way that is responsive

to the needs identified in the 2021 Housing Study, which found 500 units of housing are required each year for the next 10 years in order to meet our needs, while also protecting what our community values. We strive to have a strong greenway system to link not only our parks and recreation amenities but also our neighborhoods to vibrant employment centers like Downtown and UNC. We want there to be enough economic development to support the needs of our community members—office space, grocery stores, restaurants, shopping, etc. And we want the Town services we provide to support our community's expectations.

During the next year, you will hear a lot about developing a "Complete Community", a new approach to housing that clarifies where and how much housing will be built in order to make Chapel Hill an inclusive, sustainable, and economically competitive community well

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### In the Spotlight: Janelle Bailey

Janelle Bailey has served as a Manager in Technology Solutions for the Town of Chapel Hill since 2018. Her professional career actually started in Chapel Hill with Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina before she moved on to the publishers of the Yellow Pages, Town of Cary, and eventually back to Chapel Hill.

Although she's from northeastern Ohio, near Cleveland, her parents grew up on the same street together in Winston-Salem, so North Carolina is home. And she says family is extremely important to her.

"My parents were community-service oriented, so that's why it has been so important to me from the beginning," Janelle said. "I think that's why I truly believe in the corny clichés like 'one team; one dream.'"

Janelle is a proud Magna Cum Laude graduate of North Carolina Central University's School of Business Computer Information Systems program.

"My goal is to remove the obstacles for the people I work with and the people they serve so they can focus on what's most valuable in their roles," Janelle said. "I am very proud of the accomplishments my

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The Chapel Hill Fire Department participated in a confined space rescue training with NC Task Force 8. Training with our partners, including the Raleigh and Durham Fire Departments, ensures we'll be able to work together during emergencies. (see p. 2 for more)



## Town Employees Celebrate PRIDE

Town of Chapel Hill employees were representing their pride at the 2022 Durham Pride Parade! The parade on Sept. 24 was Durham's first in-person Pride since 2019 and had the theme "IRL" ("in real life"). The crowd of spectators was huge and enthusiastic, waving pride flags, dressing in rainbow colors, and connecting and supporting the LGBTQIA+ community. There was also a great mix of marchers ranging from nation-wide corporate and small business floats, to local churches and municipalities.

Town employees wore their pride shirts and marched alongside the 2022 Pride Bus, which was truly the big hit of the parade! The bus, designed by queer Durham artist WuTang McDougal, was commissioned in the Spring of 2022 and will be in circulation for at least the next 15 months. Chapel Hill Transit partnered with Community Arts and Culture, the Town's LGBTQIA+ Employee Resource Group and local artists to create a PRIDE bus wrap and new PRIDE art shelter as part of the Town's pride month celebration. Thanks to **Steve Wright** and the Community Arts and Culture Team for helping make this happen.



## Our New Police Chief!

**Celisa Lehw** has been chosen as the Town of Chapel Hill's ninth Police Chief, effective January 1, 2023. She will be the Town's first female police chief. Celisa has served in leadership roles in each of the department's divisions in her nearly 19-year career in Chapel Hill.

"I am proud to lead the Guardians of the Hill in a community that is supportive of a progressive, forward-thinking department," said Asst. Chief Lehw. "We have a very strong foundation of community policing, and our officers are at the heart of that. As Chief, I will support and invest in our team, so we can give our best to our community."

Celisa is a native of Sault Ste Marie, Canada. She earned a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice from Lake Superior State University and a Master's in Justice Administration from Methodist University. She enjoys spending time with her husband, their two daughters, and the family's French Bulldog.



## Confined Space Rescue Training at UNC

The Fire Department completed a confined space rescue training at UNC Environment, Health & Safety with other members of NC Task Force 8, a group of first responders who have urban search and rescue skills. Trainees took turns rescuing a weighted mannequin from an underground stormwater pipe. Sometimes rescuers have to go into pipes that are only 18 to 24 inches wide.

Training with our partners, including the Raleigh and Durham Fire Departments, ensures we'll be able to work together during emergencies. With construction and other projects, workers at UNC-CH enter confined spaces more than 300 times a year. Training on the UNC-CH campus allows emergency crews to be more familiar with the environment and improves communication between the university and Town departments. Read More:

<https://bit.ly/3R6hKbn>





# Briefs

## Anita Badrock

(Ombuds) has been promoted to Senior Ombuds. Anita facilitates meaningful conversations and does a lot of behind-the-scenes work to improve our organization.



**Shannon Bailey** has joined the Housing Team as Housing Officer. She will be dedicated to improving the experience of applicants to Public Housing. In her free time, she enjoys hiking, cooking, birding, adventures, making functional art, drag queens, meditation, and biking.



## Emma Baldwin

is the new Administrative Assistant for HRD. Emma enjoys organizing, problem solving, and giving solicited advice. Her duties include O2 Fitness applications and badge access.



**Sarah Belcher** is now Police Crisis Supervisor. Sarah was instrumental in creating Orange County's Child Abuse Multidisciplinary Team and has received Employee of the Year and Life Saving awards.



**Carla Burnette** is the new Administrative Coordinator for Technology Services. Carla has worked for the Town since 1993 and prides herself on providing excellent customer service.



**Chris Butts** is our new Chief Information Officer. He has a strong mix of experience as a director and a vision for Technology Solutions. In his free time, he hikes, gardens, tries to be more handy around the house, and cheers on the Tar Heels.



**Matt Cecil** (Transit) has completed the 2022 ENO Transportation Mid-Manager (TMM) Program. This leadership development seminar requires a substantial investment in time and effort, following a competitive selection process.

**Scott Hackler** (Fire) has been hired as Training Captain for Fire Professional Development. Scott has many certifications and has completed many National Fire Academy courses.

## Susann Harris

(HRD) is our new HR Consultant and Learning and Development Manager. Susann has a passion for inspiring others to be the best they can be.



**Elizabeth Houghton** (Sustainability) is the Town's first Sustainability Outreach Coordinator. She has a Master's of Environmental Management and a Renewable Energy Management certificate.



**Judy Johnson** is now the full-time Assistant Director of Planning. Judy has been working double-duty for 18 months by also managing the Current Development Division and its unprecedented workload through the pandemic.

**Corey Liles** (Planning) is now managing the Current Development Division. His responsibilities include project-level planning and development review and development review processes.

**Tyler Martinez** is the new Administrative Coordinator for Affordable Housing and Community Connections and Planning. He will coordinate many operational functions that keep our departments running.



**Mariah McClendon** has joined us in the role of Planning Technician. She has a BS in Behavioral and Social Sciences from NCCU. Outside of work, her interests include music and connecting with nature.



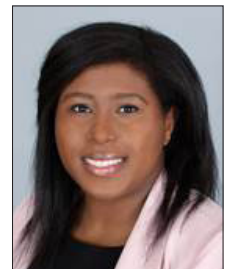
**Chris Morris** (Technology Solutions) has been promoted to Information Security Officer. Chris is working with Town departments and vendors to make plans to keep our cyber environment working safely.

**Tanner Thompson** (Parks and Recreation) has been promoted to Park Maintenance Superintendent. He has an extensive background in landscape maintenance, construction, and project management.

**Sarah Potter** is the new Economic Development Program Coordinator. She will be helping with marketing and communication and overseeing administrative work. She has an MPA from the University of Georgia.



**Alysha Phanord** has joined the DEI Team as Program Analyst. She is a Spelman graduate and holds an MBA from the University of Central Florida. Alysha will assist with implementing the Reimagining Community Safety Action Plan and creating metrics to drive equity-driven results.

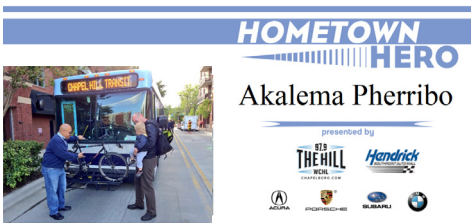




*These new firefighters have finished training. They were already certified firefighters when they came to us, so it's a faster training process compared to when someone has to go through an academy. (l-r) Riggs Long, Nolan White, Brandon Mitchell, Jordan Smith, Michael Neese*



*Seven new officers completed Basic Law Enforcement Training (BLET) over the summer. The new Guardians of the Hill are now on the job.*



**Akalema Pheribo** (Transit), a beloved long-time transit operator who died after a brief illness, was named a WCHL Hometown Hero. Transit Director Brian Litchfield says that Akalema never met a stranger and absolutely loved driving a bus. He was a Transit operator for more than 18 years. He was the first to volunteer in special events and difficult assignments, including transporting people during flooding or from the coast in hurricane evacuations. Akalema was used as the model for an ideal driver in the Transit Ambassadors driver training program.

## New Crisis Team Members

The Police Crisis Team has two new members — **Troy Manns** and **Kathleen Tuohy**. As Transit Crisis Counselor, Troy will support Transit Operators and customers. Kathleen is with the team as a fulltime Crisis Counselor. She has a Master's degree in Social Work from UNC-Chapel Hill and a Bachelor's in Social work from UNCW.



## On the Front Burner

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into the future. A Council sub-committee has been working closely with staff, the rest of Council, and an internationally renowned consultant, Jennifer Keesmaat, to develop the principles for our Complete Community effort. Council will consider next steps for Complete Community on December 7th with the goal of ensuring Complete Community is connected to various departments and projects around town.

## Five Year Budget Strategy

Through the work we have done on the five-year budget strategy, we know the Town is already behind in funding for many of our critical services due to previous cuts or freezes in the budget. We have taken some important steps to address compensation for our most valuable assets – all of you – through the Comp and Class Study, with additional investment yet to come. But we recognize we have fallen behind in funding our capital infrastructure as well, such as building maintenance and fleet replacement. During the next few months, we will be discussing our current and future needs with the Council in an effort to shape our budget to meet our short-term and long-term service goals. We will not solve these issues as part of the FY 2024 budget process, but our hope is the Town will take some progressive steps toward correcting our imbalance and providing our employees with the proper resources you need to continue to offer

high-quality services.

## Challenging Times

We are living through incredibly challenging times. As we work to put COVID behind us, our society continues to struggle with an increase in random, violent attacks like at Q-Club in Colorado Springs, the Tops grocery store in Buffalo, or the recent shooting in Raleigh; inflation has put extreme pressure on our budgets at home; while political strife continues to cause divisions in our country. With all of this turmoil, it's more important than ever that one, we take care of ourselves, and two, we continue to provide services and support to our community.

Each of us contributes to the social fabric that is Chapel Hill. Our residents look to us for consistency, care, and leadership when times are tough. We rose to the occasion during the pandemic and are doing so again in this seemingly chaotic world. Our residents know they can rely on our team to deliver on our promise of providing exceptional service even, when we are facing our own trials. As we prepare for the holiday season, I hope each of you will take some time to relax and re-charge. To take time to be thankful for what we have, but to remain committed to bringing about the change needed to improve the quality of life for all of our residents. This is what we are called to do. As always, I know we are capable of taking on these challenges and thriving as an organization.



# Compliments

**Rigoberto Rodriguez** and **Antwuan Riggsbee** (Public Works) were thanked by Hilary Culbertson for offering to collect a bag of dog poop. "We have always had great experiences with all our trash collectors. We appreciate them and the hard work they do!"

**Terry Gill** and **Sarah Belcher** (both Police) were commended by Susan Brown (Library) for helping navigate a tricky situation. "I'm so impressed by their professionalism, compassion, and teamwork."

Mark Overby thanked the Town for adding new bike lanes. "I think they will be a great addition and be a benefit for everyone."

**Public Works crews** were thanked by Don Liner for their quick response to his request to repair pavement and water drains on Tenney Circle.

**Dajuan Johnson, Cris Rosas, and Marcus Shrader** (all Public Works) were commended by John Milan for helping him with trash collection when he was late putting the trash cart out. "Just wanted to let you know how nice they were and what great service they provided."

**Fred Rogers** and **Howard Baldwin** (both Public Works) were thanked by Shannon Kennedy for being helpful when they delivered new trash carts. "I really just wanted to send a shout out to Fred and Howard, because they were so impressive and professional today."

From Anita Badrock (Ombuds): "I'd like to give **Wendy Simmons** and **Fred Rogers** (both Public Works) an attaboy for quick response to resolve a community concern regarding a vulnerable resident's trash collection. They are also helping the resident connect with the county for help with additional needs."

You see our Carolina blue fire trucks around town all the time, but you don't get to see the dedicated experts who keep our fleet running! The Fire Department is thankful for the Fleet Division of the Town of Chapel Hill's Public Works Department. **Daniel, Clint, John, Cameron, Shane, Katy, Rob, Mark, and James** keep us rolling every day. They are unsung heroes.

Congratulations to **Meg McGurk** (Police) for completing the Local Government Federal Credit Union Fellows Leading for Results program at the UNC School of Government. The intensive two-week program develops leadership skills for local government professionals. .

Check out the Wall of Compliments at Town Hall! The bulletin board wasn't updated while Town facilities were closed, so we're getting caught up. If you have a compliment for a co-worker, send it to [info@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:info@townofchapelhill.org).



Chapel Hill's Vision Zero program won the Collaborative Partner of the Year award from the Governors Highway Safety Program for 2022. Huge shoutout to **Jordan Powell** (Planning) for getting Vision Zero off the ground and into an award winning program in less than a year!

The Vision Zero Resolution, which was adopted by Chapel Hill's Town Council in October 2021, states that traffic injuries and deaths are not inevitable "accidents" but preventable crashes and commits to eliminating them on Chapel Hill streets. Learn more at:

[www.townofchapelhill.org/visionzeroch](http://www.townofchapelhill.org/visionzeroch)

The Guardians of the Hill had the privilege of building Chapel Hill's newest Little Free Library. Officers helped dedicate the library at the corner of Billie Holiday Court and Eastwood Road. Busy Bees Volunteer Service Corps invited the Police Department to be part of this project. Access to books is a vital part of empowering the next generation.



This is what our #CHFDFireFamily is all about. This is what you don't see every day, but could easily happen any day. A community member recently wrote to thank a crew on Truck 74—**Noah Reagan, Brooklyn Morgan, and Sam Smith**—for a selfless act of kindness. When we tracked them down for a picture, they humbly joked that they got caught doing the right thing. They don't do this stuff for attention. They do it because they are awesome people!

"We had a flat in a parking lot this morning and they stopped, completely unprompted, on their way to lunch, to help change it. The wheel was rusted on, so it took a good bit of effort. I realize these folks do bigger and better things than this every single day, but it made a difference to us today."



## Wellness@Work Offers Fall Programs!

We have lots going on for the winter! Check it out, grab a co-worker and get started!



### Gratitude Campaign

Visit [chapelhillwellnessatwork.org](http://chapelhillwellnessatwork.org) for more info.



### Dec. 7 Lunch & Learn

Intuitive Eating: Listening to Internal Cues



### Dec. 9 & 12: Ornament Workshops



### January & February Lunch & Learns

Financial Workshops



### Jan. 24 Book Club:

Rising Strong, by Brene Brown



### Coming in January

Challenge: Thriving in 2023, Walking Group, and more!

Look for more details by email or at [chapelhillwellnessatwork.org](http://chapelhillwellnessatwork.org). To sign up, email [llackey@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:llackey@townofchapelhill.org)



## Lunch & Learn: Intuitive Eating

Join us for a Wellness@Work Lunch & Learn at noon on Dec. 7 on Zoom: Intuitive Eating & Freedom From Dieting.

This program is open to ALL employees, dependents, and pre-65 retirees. RSVP by Monday, Dec. 5: Email Liska Lackey at [llackey@email.unc.edu](mailto:llackey@email.unc.edu) or call 919-968-2796.

Topics include:

- Principles of intuitive eating
- How to support your health without worrying about your weight
- Break free from the diet yo-yo

The presenter is Sarah Sterling, Clinical Social Worker & Addiction Specialist, Behavioral Weight Management, UNC Family Medicine .



## Virtual Health Support from Teladoc

Teladoc is now available to Town employees and their dependents who are enrolled in the Town's medical plan. Teladoc offers 24/7 access to doctors who can address your non-emergency medical needs through phone or video consultations. There is a \$10 copay.

Behavioral and mental health services are also available from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

To register, download the mobile app or go to [www.teladoc.com](http://www.teladoc.com). You will be prompted to indicate your coverage is through an employer health plan.

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

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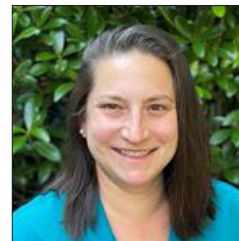
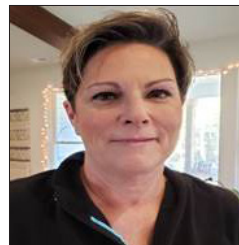
team and I have brought to the Town so far. We accomplish those goals leading with teamwork and service to our community."

As we all prepare for Thanksgiving, Janelle says she is reminded of big celebrations in years past. Having more than 20 aunts and uncles, the table(s) fill up quickly during the holidays. And it's not long between times that the family gathers with a family reunion every other year.

Janelle and her husband of 26 years have stuck together this year during difficult times, losing their son Aaron and Janelle's father shortly thereafter.

"Our 22-year-old daughter, Jaelene, is our pride and joy," Janelle said. "We are a very tight family; family is extremely important to us."

She says her work family is very important as well. That's why she says Teamwork from the Town's RESPECT values is at the top of her list. Remember, 'Teamwork makes the dream work.'



## New Mental Health First Aid Trainers

**MaryLee Tyndall** (Parks and Recreation) and **Lauren Ryan** (Transit) recently completed requirements to be certified as Mental Health First Aid Trainers for the Town. This internationally recognized, evidence- and outcomes-based program teaches how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. The training gives skills to reach out and provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance abuse problem or experiencing a crisis.

The Town will soon regularly offer this one-day training opportunity to all Town employees. Learn more at [mentalhealthfirstaid.org](http://mentalhealthfirstaid.org). In-person and virtual classes will be available. Stay tuned for more information!

