



# TOWNtalk

NEWSLETTER FOR EMPLOYEES OF THE TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL  
VOLUME 19 ISSUE 5 • MARCH 2023

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## On the Front Burner

The Town Council has officially begun the search for the next Town Manager.

I told you in a [recent video](#) that the process to hire the next permanent Town Manager is underway and that my office would keep you informed all along the way.

In February, the Council signed a contract with PoliHire, a firm that has been around for more than 16 years and specializes in local government employment, to conduct the search. The job description, which you can [find here](#), was published in early March. The firm's goal is to give Town Council everything it needs to be able to hire someone by June.

PoliHire is busy setting up stakeholder meetings with community members. That

process will continue for the next few weeks.

The firm will also be attending the next Employee Forum meeting, April 12. We wanted to let you know so you can talk with your department's Forum representative now so they can share your opinions with PoliHire.

Another way you can share your opinions about what you want to see in the next Town Manager is in a survey that is just for employees of the Town of Chapel Hill. Scan this QR code with your phone's camera or [click this link](#). All feedback will be compiled by PoliHire for the Town Council to consider as it selects the next person to lead this organization.

Lastly, don't hesitate to reach out to my office or Human Resource Development Assistant Director Tom Clark—[tclark2@townofchapelhill.org](mailto:tclark2@townofchapelhill.org)—to share your opinions. We will be sure your comments make it to PoliHire.



*Town Employee Survey for Town Manager Feedback*



A new video from Alex Carrasquillo (Communications) highlights women who work for the Town (get a link to watch on page 2)



The Town of Chapel Hill, NC  
is seeking its next  
Town Manager



[Click to view the brochure](#)

## Video Celebrates Women

**Alex Carrasquillo** (Communications) created a video that highlights women who work for the Town for International Women's Day! "Thank you to each of you for being part of this fun project – it highlights 43 women in just less than two minutes! I tried to reach as many people as time would allow, with the goal of capturing a variety of departments and services."

View the video: [Instagram](#) | [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#)

"What a privilege to serve with so many amazing women!!!! Thanks for the love Alex!"

–Tiffanie Sneed

I absolutely LOVE this video !! Thank you for putting this together! YOU ROCK!!!!

–Tamika Price

You did a FABULOUS job!!! Thank you so much! Happy International Women's Day to all the strong, talented, and purely phenomenal women!! –Jamila Lunsford

Thank you for this excellent video, Alex. I am so honored and proud to work with the phenomenal women of the Town! –Loryn Clark

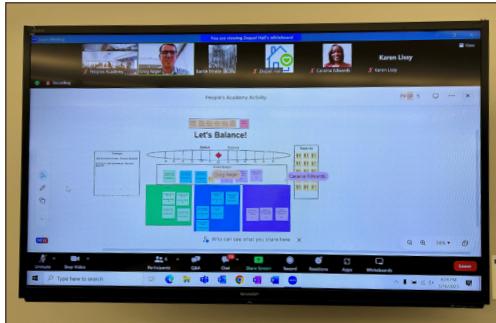
Thank you Alex! What a privilege it is to work with so many talented women.

–Anita Badrock



## 2023 Peoples Academy

The 2023 Peoples Academy was a huge success. Congratulations to everyone involved in planning and implementing the five-week program, including the planning team and any Town staff who presented during a session. Planning Team: **Sarah Poulton**, Manager's Office; **Rebecca Buzzard**, Affordable Housing & Community Connections; **Katelyn Robalino**, Affordable Housing & Community Connections; **Zequel Hall**, Affordable Housing & Community Connections; **Emily Powell**, Transit; **Luis Melodelgado**, Library; **Alysha Phanord**, Managers Office/DEI; **Molis Mout**, Managers Office



# Briefs

**Aaron Klomparens** (Public Housing) was recently promoted to Senior Housing Mechanic.

**Marasia Moss** (Public Housing), Resident Services Coordinator, is looking forward to helping connect public housing residents with various Chapel Hill resources that support their goals and celebrate their strengths. She is a North Carolina native and has an extensive background in community advocacy and resource management. She is currently working towards a master's degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling.



**Britany Waddell** (Planning) has been appointed to the National League of Cities' University Communities Council (UCC). The UCC is comprised of municipal officials from NLC member municipalities with an institution of higher education within their borders or within adjacent municipalities. Participation in the Council ensures that the needs of university communities are reflected in the NLC's advocacy efforts. She has been involved with the International Town and Gown Association since 2008, including 8 years on their Board of Directors.

**Shenekia Weeks** (Manager) has been accepted to participate in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE's) Inaugural Innovation Communities Pilot. The pilot begins in April and concludes in December. Over the course of the year this group for 15 experienced racial equity practitioners will meet monthly to build relationships and co-produce new tools, strategies, and approaches to advance the work of racial equity in government.

**Anna-Lynn Wicker** (Public Housing)

is combining her spheres of experience in customer service and bookkeeping to serve as administrative assistant. She has a Bachelors degree in English from UNC-Chapel Hill. She strives to help all applicants and residents navigate settling into their homes.



## Severe Weather Preparedness

March 5–11 was Severe Weather Preparedness Week. It comes at a perfect time for us, because the threat of severe thunderstorms rolling through our area is greater in April. In fact, one of the worst tornado outbreaks on record in North Carolina was April 25, 2014, in which 11 tornadoes were confirmed across the state in four hours, 31 minutes.

Now that we have your attention, are you prepared? The time to prepare isn't when the national weather service issues a warning. Honestly, you should be prepared even before a watch is issued. (Think of the bread, milk, water, and toilet paper shelves at the store.) That way you can implement your plan

between the time a watch is issued and the warning.

So, what do you need to prepare? Thankfully, there is a great resource in [Ready.gov](#) to help you. Take time now to plan, build a kit, and be ready

to act quickly. If you need any help from Emergency Management, contact [Michelle Daschner](#) or [Kelly Drayton](#).

**STORM PLANNING TIMELINE**

A few days out	The day before	The day of
<p><i>If the forecast calls for severe weather in a few days, start preparing now.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Make sure that you have emergency supplies</li><li>Know your safe places</li><li>Have a family communication plan</li></ul>	<p><i>The day before, forecast accuracy continues to improve.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Adjust plans</li><li>Make sure your phone can receive WEAs</li><li>Ensure your shelter is clean and accessible</li></ul>	<p><i>Remain vigilant and aware of any active Watches. A Warning may be issued at a moment's notice!</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Remind your family of the communication plan</li><li>Know how to evacuate and/or get to safety from wherever you are</li><li>When a Warning is issued, you may only have seconds to take action!</li></ul>

[weather.gov](#)

## Sustainable Upgrades for Athletic Fields

The Cedar Falls Park multipurpose athletic fields, which are now open for use, have new turf and lighting upgrades that create a safe and sustainable space for Chapel Hill Parks and Recreation users to play sports like soccer, lacrosse, and ultimate frisbee.

Renovations took place in January and February. Town staff and elected leaders celebrated the new, sustainable additions at a ribbon cutting March 23. [Read more.](#)



## Public Housing Annual Plan

Public Housing staff submits an Annual Public Housing Agency (PHA) Plan to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) every year in April. Preparing for the Annual PHA Plan includes an all-resident meeting to solicit suggestions on how the department could best utilize Capital Grant Funds, as well as a Public Meeting for anyone who is interested to review and provide feedback on the Annual PHA Plan.

The Plan also includes updates to policies which dictate the processes in place for handling applications, leasing to new tenants, and providing sustainable, affordable low income housing to our communities most vulnerable populations.

Staff is mindful to share information and solicit feedback in the four most predominantly spoken languages in Public Housing: English, Karen, Burmese, and Arabic.

## More Options to Charge Electric Vehicles

Two new electric vehicle charging spaces with ADA accessibility are now available in the Eubanks Park-and-Ride Lot.

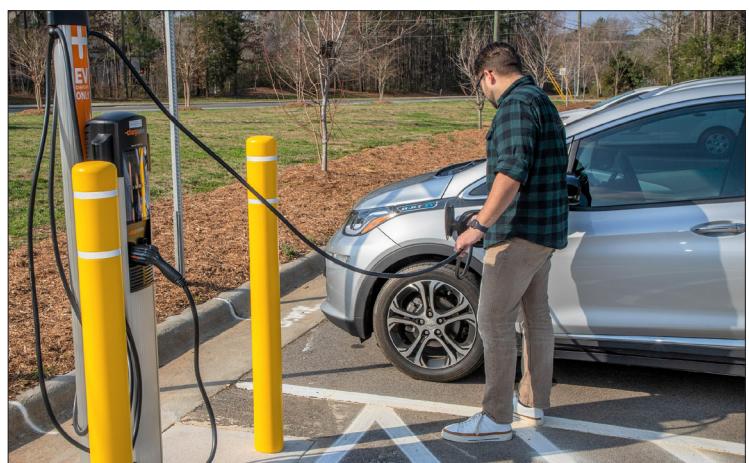
"Community members can plug in their vehicle and then hop on a fare-free electric bus," said Brian Litchfield, Director of Chapel Hill Transit.

The Eubanks Park-and-Ride lot is also illuminated by efficient LED lights and has solar-powered security cameras.

The new Level-2 charging station is part of a growing electric vehicle infrastructure in Chapel Hill. Of the more than 75 publicly available charging stations in Chapel Hill, the Town owns

and maintains stations at the Homestead Aquatic Center, Town Hall, and the public level of the 140 West parking garage. There will be more than 20 charging stations in the new Rosemary Street parking deck, which will be completed in early 2024.

"Transportation creates 26% of greenhouse gas emissions in Chapel Hill, and these chargers make it easier for people to have a lower-carbon commute," said Brennan Bouma, Sustainability Program Analyst for the Town of Chapel Hill.



*Michael Sudol (GIS/TS) using the new EV charger in the Eubanks Park-and-Ride Lot*

# Compliments

Staff from the Refugee Community Partnership thanked **Affordable Housing & Community Connections staff** for providing interpretation equipment.

"Thank you so much for the use of the [interpretation] headsets... We had a great time on Saturday and the families benefited so much from using the headsets. We had Dari, Farsi, Arabic and Swahili attendees. We could not have done it without the equipment!"

Bergen Watterson (Planning) thanked coworkers for helping to submit an application for a RAISE grant on short notice. "This was the most epic example of teamwork I've experienced since starting at the Town 6 years ago. Great work by a great team – Josh Mayo, Roger Henderson, Caroline Dwyer, and Melanie Miller."

Other people who helped with the grant application include Brennan Bouma, Michael Sudol, Shay Stevens, Jeanne Brown, Dwight Bassett, Mary Jane Nirdlinger, Walker Harrison, Marcia Purvis, Tim Schwarzhauer, and Iona Thomas.

The **Public Works Facilities Division** played a key role in assisting Parks & Recreation with their annual maintenance shutdown at the Aquatic Center. The eight-person crew administered leak detection procedures to the Lap Pool, performed preventative building maintenance, and installed new hairdryers and water bottle filling stations — just days after reopening, this has already generated great praise from patrons! Thank you for your commitment and helping to complete the project on time. Well done!



For Black History Month in February, SERVPRO of South Durham & Orange County honored the history and achievements of Black Americans. One of their honorees was our own Fire Chief **Vence Harris**, who was recognized for his years of service to the community. Congratulations!

## Public Housing Quarterly Progress Report

Public Housing staff presented a progress report to Council on Feb. 22. Staff shared updates related to enterprise funds received from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the corresponding annual site visit. Based on recommendations from HUD, staff is working to obtain additional vendors to improve the unit-turnaround time of vacated rental units,

as well as working with a new landscaper to beautify public housing properties and a new vendor to clean roofs and gutters.

Staff shared demographic data on residents and applicants so Council and the Interim Town Manager have a sense of who is living in Public Housing and who staff has in mind when developing supportive services and programming.

## Mayor's Bike-the-Trail Ride

Save the date for a bike ride to celebrate Earth Day from 2 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, April 22. Join Chapel Hill Mayor Pam Hemminger at Chapel Hill Community Center park (120 S. Estes Drive) for a two-mile bike ride and water break to celebrate Earth Day. All ages are welcome. More information: [gochapelhill.org](http://gochapelhill.org)

A promotional graphic for the TOWNtalk podcast. It features the TOWNtalk logo with a circular design and the text 'TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL THE PODCAST'. Below the logo are four small portraits of the hosts: Matthew DeBellis, Troy Manns, Venessa Sanders, and Fred Rogers. Each portrait has a name tag below it. To the left of the portraits are four buttons with download links: 'Listen on Apple Podcasts', 'Listen on Amazon music', 'LISTEN ON Spotify', and 'Listen on Google Podcasts'.

### TOWNtalk the podcast

We have four new episodes of TOWNtalk the podcast available since our last TOWNtalk newsletter. Learn more about your colleagues **Matthew DeBellis, Troy Manns, Venessa Sanders, and Fred Rogers**.

<https://spotifyanchor-web.app.link/e/Csc0n8Euxyb>

A poster for the Mayor's Bike-the-Trail Ride on April 22, 2023. The poster features the text 'EARTH DAY 2023 2 - MILE BICYCLE RIDE' and 'Mayor's Bike-the-Trail Ride'. It includes a QR code, a map of the route, and the text 'For All Ages!'. The poster also features the Chapel Hill logo and a globe with a bicycle.

Join the Mayor of Chapel Hill for a bike ride & water break celebrating Earth Day!

Go Chapel Hill

Parks and Recreation



# wellness@work

UNC HEALTH | FAMILY MEDICINE

TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL

## After-Hours Urgent Care

Where can you go for care when the Wellness Clinic is closed? Employees, dependents, and pre-65 retirees who participate in the Town health insurance plan can receive after-hours care – with NO copay – from 5 to 8 p.m. Monday–Friday at UNC Urgent Care at the Family Medicine Center (590 Manning Drive).

When you check in, refer the front desk staff to the Town of Chapel Hill/Wellness@Work flyer posted on the check-in desk

## Spring Wellness Programs

The Spring Into Action Challenge begins on April 17. Log your points for any activity you choose and you'll be eligible to win prizes. Form a team for additional team prizes, and have fun with group activities.

A virtual Mindfulness series, led by Paula Huffman, is open to all employees, dependents, and pre-65 retirees. The Town will cover half the cost, so participants will pay only \$40. Sessions will be held from 6 to 7:30 on Tuesdays, April 25 through May 16.

To sign up, contact Liska Lackey at [llackey@email.unc.edu](mailto:llackey@email.unc.edu) or 919-968-2796.

## Spotlight on new Tobacco Cessation Specialist Charlie Sapp

### Give him a call at 984-974-8455

Wellness@Work is pleased to announce our new Tobacco Cessation Specialist, Charlie Sapp. A Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Licensed Clinical Addiction Specialist, Charlie has experience working with substance use concerns, anxiety, depression, trauma, and relationship counseling.

Charlie is excited to be working with the program, and shares his thoughts on the program and how he can help you become tobacco-free:

"Tobacco addiction is incredibly hard to stop alone. If you have been trying to stop smoking cigarettes, E cigarettes, or dipping tobacco without success, Wellness@Work is here to support you. I'm available to help you reach your health goals- be that to reduce or quit.

This free and comprehensive program is available to employees, dependents and pre-65 retirees. We offer many options, depending on your needs, including medications to help reduce cravings: prescription medications, nicotine patches, gums, and lozenges are all

covered 100% with your insurance. Combining medications with coaching offers the most comprehensive plan for you to become tobacco-free.

I'm available for phone or video sessions, which can be scheduled during your work hours. The coaching call can be whatever fits your needs; anywhere from 15- 30 minutes.

I'm here to celebrate and encourage you along the way, including \$100 gift cards when you quit tobacco for 6 months and another \$100 gift card when you reach your one-year anniversary.

I'm well aware that becoming tobacco-free is not a one step process. Often, it means taking two steps forward and one step back. But each time you have a setback you will learn something and try again with support until you succeed. Give me a call and we can schedule a time to talk and get you started on reaching your goal: 984-974-8455."



## HRA Drive begins April 3

The 2023 HRA Drive will run from April 3 to June 2. This year, there are two parts to the HRA:

- Questionnaire (required), and
- Biometric screening (optional but encouraged)

HRA Questionnaire: Complete in [UNC My Chart](#) by June 3 to ensure that cost sharing for insurance is waived. If you are signed up to UNC My Chart, you will receive a message with the questionnaire attached. If you don't want to do the questionnaire through UNC My Chart, you can fill out a paper copy and it will be entered on your behalf.

Biometric Screening Clinics will be held off-site and at the Wellness Clinic in the lower level of the Public Housing office at 317 Caldwell St. Ext. You don't need to make an appointment. Learn your numbers—cholesterol, diabetes, blood pressure, and weight. You'll get a prize (insulated water bottle or lunch bag)

### Clinic Dates:

Thursday, April 6, 9 to 12, Wellness Clinic  
Thursday, April 13, 9 to 12, Wellness Clinic  
Friday, April 14, 9 to 12, Wellness Clinic  
Thursday, April 20, 11 to 2, Library  
Friday, April 21, 9 to 12, Wellness Clinic  
Thursday, April 27, 1 to 4, Public Works  
Friday, April 28, 9 to 12, Wellness Clinic  
Thursday, May 4, 1 to 4, Public Works  
Friday, May 5, 9 to 12, Police  
Thursday, May 11, 12 to 4, Transit  
Friday, May 12, 9 to 12, Police  
Thursday, May 18, 12 to 4, Transit  
Friday, May 19, 12 to 4, Transit

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