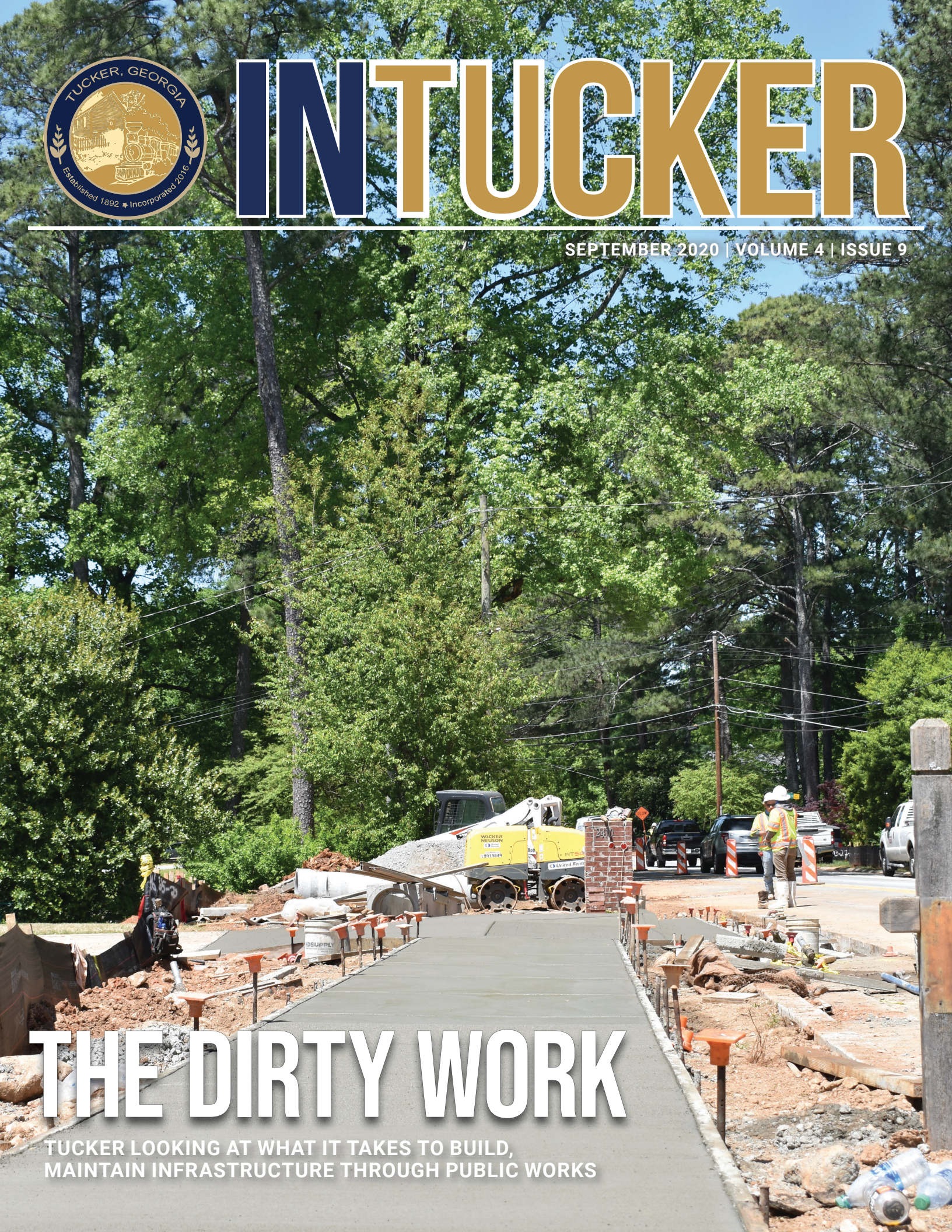




INTUCKER

SEPTEMBER 2020 | VOLUME 4 | ISSUE 9



THE DIRTY WORK

TUCKER LOOKING AT WHAT IT TAKES TO BUILD,
MAINTAIN INFRASTRUCTURE THROUGH PUBLIC WORKS

EDITOR'S NOTE



One of the best parts about working for Team Tucker is getting to know our people. Our staff is

a diverse and fun group of professional folks who are dedicated to making Tucker a better place. That's why I'm so excited about a couple of the features in this September issue.

Traditionally between May and August, we have a summer intern here in Tucker. The internships we offer don't include fetching coffee or running errands; these interns have had a variety of specializations including stormwater engineering, city planning and transportation engineering. Their contributions to our success as a city have been immeasurable.

This summer, we expanded our program from one intern to four. That's a big increase, but each of these interns brought a different specialty to our city operations. We had expertise across the spectrum. As they will tell you on page 10, these interns learned a lot. But I'll tell you here that we gained a lot from having them on Team Tucker. A fresh perspective is always good to have around. So is a tireless work ethic.

And so is chemistry. On page 14, you're going to meet Cynthia and Chris Satterfield. Cynthia joined our staff last year and Chris came onboard not too long after. They are our Mr. and Mrs. Tucker. Both are great in their respective departments, bringing skill sets that are helping Tucker residents every day.

I hope you enjoy reading about our awesome staff. And next time you're at City Hall, make sure to say hi so that we can get to know you, too!

MATT HOLMES
INTUCKER EDITOR

IN THIS ISSUE



ON THE COVER

Do you know what people mean when they talk about "Public Works"? It's a term that'll be discussed quite a bit here in Tucker these next few months. Mayor Auman gives a rundown on page 3.



CLASS IN SESSION

One Tucker school is blending virtual learning with the old-fashioned face-to-face approach. On page 6, hear from the principal at Smoke Rise Prep on how they're weathering school in the age of coronavirus.



BUSINESS BOOM

Tucker has a new high-end restaurant and it's located in a familiar place. On page 12, John McHenry takes us to the new-look Tucker Brewing Company and examines their chef inspired menu.



DO-GOODER

Her job is all about giving back to the less fortunate in our community. On page 8, get to know our Citizen of the Month and how she's even using her free time to make Tucker a better place.



ASK RIP

From golf to pickleball and even e-Sports, the action is heating up this fall here in Tucker. On page 15, our Parks and Recreation Director previews what promises to be a busy month of competition.



INTUCKER

VOLUME 4, ISSUE 9

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From the Mayor:



When we started up the City of Tucker back in 2016, we did it with overwhelming support for our promise to take on three essential services from DeKalb County: planning and zoning, code enforcement, and parks and recreation. As elected officials, we set out to offer a higher level of service for the same, or in some cases less, money than unincorporated Tucker had been paying to DeKalb for years and years. Take a look around our city today and you can see the results. We have streamlined the land use approval process, making things easier and more transparent for residents and developers. We have better maintained properties and rights-of-way being overseen by professional and proactive staff. And we have replaced and modernized playground and safety equipment in every park within our city limits. To imagine that all happened within the first four years of cityhood is very impressive and is a testament to the professionalism and hard work of our staff and elected officials.

We also said we would constantly evaluate all the other services a city is empowered to provide, and consider adopting them whenever we thought we could provide them better, faster and/or cheaper. We promised, and even had it put into our charter, that before we would

take on a service like that, we would analyze every facet of it, educate our citizens about it, and ask for your approval via a referendum. And that brings me to a discussion that you may be hearing a lot about; a discussion that I implore you to educate yourself on and get involved with.

In the last few months and even longer, the City Council and staff have been considering whether it would make sense for Tucker to stand up its own Public Works Department. That's a term you often hear but may not truly understand, partly because it's used for different things in different places. Your tax dollars go toward funding it, so it is important that you know what it means. In our case, it encompasses potholes and road repair, sidewalks, stoplights and signage, and management of the stormwater that runs off the roads and every property in Tucker. The City of Tucker currently receives those services through two intergovernmental agreements (IGAs) with DeKalb County. We let them keep the property taxes and fees for those services and they do the work just as they did before Tucker incorporated. Now that we are maturing, we find ourselves having discussions about taking on this critical service from the County.

(continued on page 9)

City Council Update

Tucker's Mayor and City Council gathered three times in the month of August, discussing and deciding on several critical issues. At the meeting on August 10, Council voted to authorize the Mayor to approve an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) with DeKalb County on approximately \$4.1 million in federal funding being directed to the City of Tucker for pandemic response. The City plans to use the CARES Act money on programs including small business grants, mask distribution, housing and food insecurity.

At a special called meeting on August 18, Council held an in-depth discussion on the CARES Act to further discuss how best to distribute the funding.

On August 24, Council held a work session followed by a brief regular meeting. The work session saw

discussion of several important topics, including:

- a policy on organized play and programming within the purview of the Tucker Parks and Recreation Department. This discussion centered largely around the Tucker Football League and TYSA, which utilize City of Tucker fields
- a stormwater ordinance and referendum discussion with subject matter experts answering Council questions about what other cities have done and are doing in the realm of stormwater management
- the City bringing traffic citations to court at the new City Hall (1975 Lakeside Parkway, Suite 350) beginning on October 7

The next meeting of the Mayor and City Council will be on September 14 at 7 p.m. at the City Hall Annex.

DATES TO KNOW

September 7

All city buildings closed (Labor Day)

September 14

City Council

September 15

Zoning Board of Appeals

September 16

Municipal Court

September 21

Downtown Development Authority

September 23

Municipal Court

September 28

City Council



In a special ceremony before the August 10 meeting, Mayor Auman swore in Keith Easterling and Joe Singleton to serve another term on the Zoning Board of Appeals and Frank Sapp and Jessica Vargas to serve on the Planning Commission. (Credit: tuckerga.gov)

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA



 **Nextdoor**

ON THE BEAT *with Lt. Schoepner*

Lt. D.G. Schoepner is Tucker's liaison to the DeKalb County Police Department and can be followed at [facebook.com/dgschoepner](https://www.facebook.com/dgschoepner) or emailed at dgschoepner@dekalbcountyga.gov



Panhandling is a constant problem throughout the metro Atlanta area. It is not uncommon for these folks to be standing at just about any exit ramp from the various interstates.

This year your typical panhandling has morphed into the form of something else. This year you are very likely to see juveniles at intersections selling water. Many people see this as nothing more than a 21st century lemonade stand. This month we're going to discuss why this isn't such a good idea and why you should not support it.

On its face, it seems pretty harmless. Instead of getting into trouble, juveniles are channeling their energy into something entrepreneurial. They can go to a store, buy cases of water for relatively cheap and then sell them individually for quite a bit more. I've spoken to folks that say they can regularly triple their money or more. Just like traditional panhandling, they make pretty decent money for very little effort.

So why would the police be opposed to something that appears to be so positive? In short, because it's incredibly dangerous. Even in the best of circumstances it is very difficult to get Atlanta traffic and pedestrians to cohabitate. Just last year, I witnessed a juvenile pedestrian get hit when they were trying to cross Lawrenceville Highway and Hugh Howell Road. Now just imagine someone whose attention is focused more on getting the attention of a potential customer, darting amongst traffic to make the sale, and then getting back. Then consider that young people already tend to make risky decisions. Finally, compound that with the drivers that may or may not be paying that much attention when they are stopped.

Now is when we get to the part where you all come in. The best thing you all can do is just not buy water from these young folks. The only reason they do it is because everyone else makes it worth their while. If the demand went away, they would move on to other, safer things. I know it seems mean. But unless something is done, it is only a matter of time before a young person is needlessly hurt or killed.



DeKalb County Police have received numerous complaints about daily bottled water peddling at the intersection of Idlewood and Fellowship Roads. (Credit: tuckerga.gov)

ROOMERS AND ZOOMERS

SMOKE RISE PREP EXECUTING HYBRID ED STRAT DURING COVID OUTBREAK

Sometimes being small can have its advantages. Just ask the administration of Smoke Rise Prep, a private K-8 school on Hugh Howell Road here in Tucker. On August 19, thanks to its small class sizes and modest student enrollment, the school was able to open its doors and welcome students and teachers for the 2020-'21 school year.

"The parent reaction has been super supportive right now because they have an option," explained principal Sherrie Waddell. "For the parents who have to work or have other issues, they have a place for their child. For the ones who are not comfortable, they have a place for their child and can do it at home."

Waddell and her administrative team met with parents during the summer and distributed a parent survey to gauge interest in a return to in-person instruction. Despite the ongoing pandemic, many parents were open to the idea of sending their children back into the classroom. Still, others were hesitant. So, Smoke Rise Prep devised a compromise approach to education: elementary age students can attend in person, they can connect via Zoom, or they can take it day by day. As for the middle school grades, they started the year completely virtual, a status that could soon change.

"The parent reaction has been super supportive right now because they have an option,"

"We kind of call them the Roomers and the Zoomers," Waddell said. "The kids in the room are the Roomers and the ones who are at home are the Zoomers because they're Zooming in. We anticipate it's going to take until Labor Day to get used to that new way of teaching."



Speaking of teaching, one of the groups nationwide that has been most hesitant to a return to normal has been educators. In DeKalb County, a survey of teachers showed the vast majority did not feel comfortable returning to the classroom this fall; that's one of the reasons new superintendent Cheryl Watson-Harris cited for beginning the year virtually. But at Smoke Rise Prep, Waddell says it was just the opposite.

"The majority of our teachers were begging to come back into the school just to have that sense of schedule, to have some sense of normalcy," she explained. "We are so blessed to have teachers here who feel that teaching is their passion; it's what they were created to do. So, we really did not get a lot of pushback from the teachers."

"We are so blessed to have teachers here who feel that teaching is their passion; it's what they were created to do. So, we really did not get a lot of pushback from the teachers."

This grand experiment of in-person education has by all accounts succeeded thus far. But, according to Smoke Rise Prep Assistant Director Tascha Bevins, this is not a case of a one size fits all approach to education.



"If I was in a public school, there's no question: I would shut down, I would go virtual, I would not want to come in," she said. "It's difficult enough with 80 students for us to give that one-on-one [instruction] and we do, and we make that happen because of our numbers."

"We're very small. We don't have buses. We don't have to fool with a lot of things," Waddell added.

The administrative team says one of the unexpected benefits of the decision to reopen has been increased interest from parents outside the Smoke Rise Prep community who want their children in school, driving a small uptick in enrollment inquiries. As for the students themselves, Bevins estimated that about 20 of their elementary age youngsters are in class, a fact that warms her heart.

"These kids have been through the ringer this summer. To come in [the first day] and see how excited the kids were to see each other, you could see the light behind their eyes again," she recounted. "They didn't care that they were wearing a mask. They didn't care that they were on [socially distant] tape. They didn't care that they had to eat outside. They were so happy to be with each other, to see each other. And so now our goal is to work really hard to build that community between the kids who are here and the kids who aren't and this time next year, no matter what, hopefully we'll all be together."

If the experiment taking place at Smoke Rise Prep ends up a success, Tucker may not have to wait until this time next year to have all of its students together back in a classroom.

SAFETY PRECAUTIONS

Smoke Rise Prep is dedicated to educating its students this fall but, they say, student safety is their top priority. Therefore, they have instituted a long list of safety protocols and precautions being followed each day to ensure that they can continue educating in the classroom.

- Mandatory masks
- Daily temperature checks
- Frequent washing of hands
- Hand sanitizing stations
- Daily cleaning of building and surfaces
- Social distance markings
- Reduced class size
- Outdoor lunches
- No class changes

CITIZEN OF THE MONTH

STEPHANIE SUGGS

A fierce defender of anyone marginalized. A creative artist. A master at helping neighbors who may be struggling. A deep-souled empath who connects with everyone she meets. These traits make Stephanie Suggs our Citizen of the Month—because she uses her talents and skills to serve.

Whether it's teaching art journaling as spiritual practice (check that out on Facebook @ AtlantaCommunityArtsCenter) or helping to keep a family housed or feeding someone down on their luck, Stephanie always puts the other person first.

A graduate of Queens University in Charlotte, Stephanie also has a master's in creative writing. Her commitment to her community started right out of college and her entire career has been in non-profit work, from Atlanta to California and New Mexico. Stephanie came home to Tucker a few years ago. A graduate of Henderson High School and long-time member of Tucker First United Methodist, Stephanie's roots grow deep here. Those roots make her service to our community even more personal for her, striving every day to make Tucker a great place to live, work, play, and pray. Lucky for our city, she found a home at NETWorks Cooperative Ministry, where she is the Program Director. Part of her responsibilities include recruiting and managing volunteers. Get to know Stephanie by volunteering! You can check out the current needs at networkscoop.org/volunteer-at-networks.

Thank you, Stephanie, for all you do for our community and its members. You are truly an asset to Tucker and we salute you as Citizen of the Month.

Nomination by Raye Varney



FROM THE MAYOR (continued from page 3)



Why? Well, as with the core services I described earlier, we believe we may be able to provide a better level of service than what we're getting from DeKalb County. That's not to criticize the County or its Public Works folks. Our staff has worked closely with them to identify and prioritize things that need fixing within our city limits. It's a big county in population and geography, and sometimes that means our citizens don't get the kind of attention or responsiveness we think we should be getting. It's often months between the time a pothole is reported and the time it gets filled by county contractors. We've had busted catch basins that have sat broken for more than a year before being repaired. And maintenance of our dams has been neglected, leaving many of us to worry what's to happen during that next big rainfall.

This month, our City Council will vote on whether to put this issue to a vote on a March 2021 referendum. If so, you would get the chance to have your voice heard at the ballot box, as promised. In the meantime, our city staff will be doing everything they can to educate you on the issue of Public Works so that you can make your decision as an informed voter. And we'll continue to work with the professionals at DeKalb Public Works to improve the level of service county-wide. We may not choose to put all of Public

Works on the ballot; we could decide to recommend only the roads and sidewalks infrastructure, or just stormwater, or both, or neither. But the discussion itself has already produced positive results. We've heard about lots of the weaknesses in the current system, and we've also found and implemented some real solutions. Whether we decide to stand up our own department or continue with the current system under a "Trust but Verify" model, we'll be better for having conducted the process and educated the public.

These are big decisions, and whatever the outcome of this one, it's a process we'll continue with indefinitely into our future. Our charter allows us to always consider the best way or ways to provide specific services, and our public process for doing so is one of our great strengths. I hope you will follow along, offer your input, and ask any questions you may have about this one. And I hope you'll always stay engaged and educated about your city government.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Frank Auman".

FRANK AUMAN
MAYOR

MY SUMMER IN TUCKER

LOCAL STUDENTS RECOUNT THEIR EXPERIENCES INTERNING FOR THE CITY OF TUCKER



Brieske
, University of Georgia

summer, I interned for the City of Tucker working directly for Assistant City manager John McHenry and assisting other departments. This opportunity was especially important to me because I live and grew up in this area and have so many good memories associated with it. Over the past few weeks, I have gotten to know many of the people that care for Tucker by working within the government.

The best thing about my time with the City was encountering others, virtually or safely in person. Working for John McHenry, I attended various meetings with people in economic development around DeKalb County and Georgia. I tagged along while John met with businesses in the industrial corridor for his August article (masked and socially distanced), and I went out into the community to help with some mask deliveries. However, I also got to see what other departments do for the City. A highlight was assisting the communications team with one of my favorite Tucker traditions, the July 3rd Celebration. Whether I was a member of a hundred person “Zoom” audience or in a personal conversation, I learned from everyone I came across.

I think we all can agree that this summer was different. But what stayed the same, or arguably increased, was how much your - and my - city’s staff worked to assure that we were safe, happy, and healthy. Overall, this summer job proved to be much more than an “easy commute.” I can’t wait to look around each time I come home and see just how much this place has changed for the better because of these exceptional people.



Harris Jamal
graduate, University of Georgia

My name is Harris Jamal and I am a recent Master of Public Health graduate from the University of Georgia. This summer I have had the fortunate opportunity to work at the City of Tucker as a Public Health and Sustainability Intern. For most of the summer, I have been working on public health initiatives surrounding COVID-19 data and response. So far, I have worked on communicating with state level public health departments on streamlining guidance to long-term care facilities, created a survey to assess social distancing and mask usage in different areas of Tucker, and am currently working on a data dashboard for the City. I will also be working on several sustainability related initiatives regarding land use. My experience so far has been fascinating to say the least, as I am extremely interested in the “hidden” world of local government and policy, especially since I grew up here. As an advocate for community health, I believe that actions taken on a local level are not only more efficacious, but have the potential to change the way we approach issues as a whole. That being said, I am excited to keep applying my public health knowledge and research experiences to do such impactful work and be a better

servant to my community.



Jackson Gibbs
Senior, Young Harris College

My name is Jackson Gibbs and I am a senior outdoor leadership student at Young Harris College. This summer, I had the opportunity to intern for the City of Tucker in their Parks and Recreation department. The goal of my internship was to gain experience working in outdoor recreation, as well as in program management and promotion. During my time, I was able to work closely with the Director of Parks and Recreation, Rip Robertson, as well as Recreation Leader Crystal Dawson. Their collective knowledge and experience in the department helped me to gain a better understanding of what managing city parks and programs is like.

Throughout the summer, I worked with Crystal to develop a new set of programs to offer to the public. We called it the Family Camping Series. The objective of these programs was to provide a backcountry experience to participants that would take place close to home. This program series offered activities such as nature hikes, cooking, fire making, and even an overnight camping experience. Having experience in planning, promoting and executing these programs was the largest benefit I got from my internship. One thing that I did not expect to gain from my internship was the knowledge that I gained in park management and construction. I was given the opportunity to watch the City approve construction projects and bids to improve their parks and facilities. My time interning for the City of Tucker has been one of the best experiences of my academic career and I would recommend that other students apply for internships as well.



eil
or, Georgia Tech

summer I had the amazing opportunity to work as an intern for my hometown of Tucker alongside City Engineer Ken Hildebrandt. During this internship, I worked on a wide variety of projects ranging from analyzing the City's stormwater infrastructure to coordinating with MARTA to install bus shelters.

My favorite project, however, was the designing of sidewalks along Lynburn Drive and Cowan Road. One of the biggest draws of the civil engineering field for me is being able to see your work materialize and I can't wait to see the finished sidewalks once their construction has been completed.

This was just one of the many highlights of the internship for me. I was able to experience the City's transition into its brand-new City Hall. Also, as an aspiring transportation engineer, I enjoyed the opportunity to read through traffic and intersection studies that had been conducted for the City. Perhaps the biggest highlight of this internship for me was that all of the work seemed so meaningful because the projects pertained to the City I have been happy to live in. For example, researching the dams at Henderson and Kelley Cofer Parks was particularly interesting, since these are parks I have spent a lot of time at throughout my life. I have also come to appreciate all the behind-the-scenes work that goes into running a city that you would never expect, and an engineering career in the public sector is something I am now strongly considering.

Interested in applying for a job or internship with the City of Tucker? Visit tuckerga.gov and check out our Career Opportunities page.

BUSINESS BOOM

by John McHenry, Community and Economic Development Director



In 1998, Paul Chapman started his family's successful door and window hardware firm, the GPI Group. In 2016, when they outgrew their location in the Norcross area, they found a perfect building in terms of location and size at 2003 South Bibb Drive in

Tucker. A key selling point was extra space in the building that would allow next generation owner Ryan Chapman to fully realize a dream of starting a brewery.

Ryan was an exchange student in Germany during college, who brought home a love for the artisanal craft of brewing pilsners and lagers. After installing brewery equipment and a tasting room, Tucker Brewing Company was born and it just keeps on growing with a beer garden, event space and most recently a full-service kitchen.

On choosing a name co-owner Ashley Chapman Hubbard shared, "Tucker Brewing Company spoke to us because we're not just located in the City of Tucker, we are truly a part of the community."

And now these fine beers can also be enjoyed and found throughout metro Atlanta at supermarkets and bars, as a successful distribution of their product has rolled out over the last two years. Ryan explained that they enjoy making these high-quality German beers, but they have also added a Southern twist while creating a destination for families and beer lovers. Live bands from Thursday through Saturday, an eclectic German inspired menu that perfectly pairs with their beers and ample room for social distancing have led to increased popularity since opening.

"I'm really excited to get to share my food with the public," said Executive Chef Nicole Fey. "We've been working really hard, Ashley and I, on creating a menu that is seasonal, focuses on local produce and also speaks to our beers and pairs really well with our beers.

"We've definitely got a lot of German influence in there. We've got a pork schnitzel with a butterscotch carrot puree and some cranberry compote. So, we're trying to have a little bit of traditional German as well as a lot of seasonality and make things new and exciting and change them around four times a year."

Mayor Auman shared at the ribbon cutting for the restaurant, "I have to say we're blessed with a lot of really good businesses here in Tucker, and some go beyond being a business, they become part of the fabric of the community and that's Tucker Brewing Company."

Ryan has gone even further, getting involved in the leadership of his local Community Improvement District.

"Tucker Brewing Company is a perfect example of the awesome growth and development happening in our district," said Emory Morsberger, president of the Tucker Summit CID. "We are also pleased to welcome Ryan to our Board, his extensive business knowledge and experience will be an invaluable asset."

This is a business that, in its short time in Tucker, has given back to various community initiatives, including the Tucker Cluster schools. Now they are giving back through their kitchen...and your taste buds will be glad.



BUSINESS OF THE MONTH

GEORGIA FURNITURE MART



Tucker is home to a number of distribution and logistics facilities for companies both large and small. One of the fastest growing of those companies is Georgia Furniture Mart. With a brand new 165,000 square foot distribution center located on Greer Circle, the company is pushing out high quality furnishings to customers across metro Atlanta and the southeast.

“We’re delivering and receiving furniture five days a week in the vicinity of 800 pieces per day...somedays up to 1,000,” explained owner and president Mike Hall. “Come March, we expect to start off about 60 to 65 percent higher than that.”

Those projections are due to the expanding nature of the business. Hall says he plans to expand to four metro Atlanta stores, including a location in Kennesaw next year. To accommodate the additional inventory, he’s planning to expand his distribution center here in Tucker to 300,000 square feet as soon as late 2021.

What started out in 1986 as a store that sold waterbeds, Georgia Furniture Mart has reinvented itself over the years and is seeing that willingness to adapt pay off. Even in the uncertainty of today’s economy, Hall says business could not be better.

“We’re extremely blessed to be in an industry related to the home right now,” Hall explains. “At the start of the year we

suffered, but because people are staying home right now... there’s a lot of expendable income that’s not being spent. They’re really focused on improving their home.”

As for why he decided to build his massive distribution facility here in Tucker, Hall says it helped negate the biggest drawback of doing business in metro Atlanta: the traffic.

“In the home delivery business, the way Atlanta has grown, in order to get commercial industrial distribution space in a new building, you have to go out on the northeast side of town to Braselton and on the northwest side of town you’d have to go out almost to Canton. When you get into the city close in, there’s really no industrial land available anymore. What’s attractive about Tucker is that when you load your trucks for delivery in the morning...you can access 78 or access 285 to cut around and go to 20 and not spend a tremendous amount of time on the road. We all know how bad traffic is in Atlanta, so the location is just absolutely premier.”

Thanks in large part to their distribution capabilities, Tucker has become home to one of the fastest growing and most successful furniture companies in the United States.

Check out Georgia Furniture Mart online at gafurnituremart.com or visit their showroom in Norcross.

TEAM TUCKER *Spotlight*

CYNTHIA AND CHRIS SATTERFIELD

Cynthia, what's your background in local government?

My start in local government was with the City of Doraville in the Parks and Recreation Department as Office Manager. I transitioned to the Business License Department within a year.

What are your day-to-day responsibilities here in Tucker?

I'm the Revenue Specialist here at Tucker, where my duties include serving the business community. I am responsible for the administration of Occupational Tax Certificates/Business Licenses, Alcohol Licenses and other tax-related services.

What do you like most about your job?

What I enjoy most about my position is being able to assist business owners through the process of obtaining their licenses.

Chris, how did you get started on a career in recreation?

My start in recreation was in 1994 coaching football and basketball. In 2014, [Parks and Recreation Director] Rip [Robertson] offered me a job at Doraville Parks and Rec where I was coaching.

After working in Doraville, why did you decide to come work in Tucker?

I came to Tucker once again hired by Rip. Good move on my part.

You have dedicated your career to recreation. Why is recreation important for a community?

Recreation departments are very important to the community. It gives kids a place to learn sports and bond with other kids. They are also taught these activities by positive role models.

Off the Wall

Tell us about your family...

We are a blended family of six kids and 13 grandkids. Our home serves as "The House", where everyone gathers for most family and friends functions and celebrations.

How did you meet?

We met in Doraville at Honeysuckle Park where our kids played youth football and cheered. Our favorite shared hobby is our weekly walks because we make an adventure out of it each week.

Do you like working together?

While we don't work directly together, I've always enjoyed watching him work with the kids that he coaches through Parks and Rec.

Give us a fun fact about your spouse...

- A fun fact about my husband is that he really, really loves the beach.
- Fun fact about my wife she loves youth football. She was a cheer director for three years. Then became the president over football for 14 years. We shared the same love for youth sports and enjoy Sunday morning walks in different parks.



“ASK RIP”

Rip Robertson is the Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Tucker. He brings to the job years of experience in Parks and Rec, as well as Public Works.



If you're a sports enthusiast like I am, it's easy to get discouraged about the state of things as we enter the fall. Yes, we have the NFL. We have some college football conferences trying to piece a season together. Soccer has resumed its regular season. Baseball, basketball and hockey will all have a modified version of their playoffs. But if you like to get out and play the games yourself, if you're a weekend warrior like I was before my recent knee replacement, coronavirus has really put a damper on your leisure time activities.

Here in the Tucker Parks and Recreation Department we are looking for ways to fill that void for people in our community. We can't encourage sports with excessive contact, so you won't find us sponsoring a tackle football league or basketball league just yet. But our staff has come up with some great alternatives where you can stay socially distant and still have some fun.

The first activity we came up with is an adult pickleball league. Once the City acquired the tennis courts at Smoke Rise Bath & Racquet Club, this was a total no-brainer. Pickleball has developed such a cult following here in Tucker since we introduced the courts at Tucker Recreation Center late last year. And it's not just folks here in town; they are coming from all over metro Atlanta to play

this modified version of tennis. If you haven't tried it, what better opportunity to gain exposure than to sign up for our rec league. Seasoned veterans can enter the advanced bracket.

Next, I bet you didn't know that we have a golf star on our staff. Well, sort of. Joe Stewart was a member of the Tucker High School golf team back in his time on campus during the early 2000s. While that golf career didn't lead to the PGA Tour, he still has a passion for the game and that led him to start up a fall adult golf league. The league will take place at Smoke Rise Country Club starting on September 3 and run through the end of October. It should be a great opportunity to get out after work and maybe make some new friends.

Lastly, we are going to be hosting the City's first ever e-Sports tournament. Now, I'm going to be honest on this one: my video game knowledge is very limited. I am a member of the Atari generation and I couldn't begin to tell you about the gaming systems that are out there today. But I can tell you that we are working with professional gaming companies to ensure that this tournament is top notch in every way. Great games, great competition and, of course, great prizes. Stay tuned for details on how to sign up as that tournament takes place later this fall.

These are just three of the ways we are trying to respond to the need for recreation in the City. If you think of others, we're all ears. Email us at parcs@tuckerga.gov and let us know how we can keep Tucker going through this pandemic.





TUCKER Community Corner



9/8 – University of Government Affairs at Tucker **7-9 p.m., Zoom**

Join us for our third series of UGA at Tucker. New topics means that previous graduates are welcome back this year to expand their knowledge of their local government. Due to the public health emergency, our sessions will begin virtually through Zoom. Sign up now at tuckerga.gov/ugatucker.

9/3, 9/10, 9/17, 9/24 - Tucker Farmers Market **4-6 p.m., 4882 Lavista Road**

Need some greens? Handmade soaps? Locally sourced meats? The Tucker Farmers Market has you covered! This year, the market has gone virtual. Sign up for weekly reminders and updated links to the online store at tuckerfarmersmarket.com. Pick up is every Thursday at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church.

9/1-9/30 – “Do Something September”

“Do Something September” is an initiative from Tucker First United Methodist Church that highlights activities and mission projects that you or your family can do on your own schedule throughout the month of September. You can pick a mission project that interests you and volunteer. Visit tuckerfirst.org for more information.