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Why do we do what we do?

Public Employees Are The Face of Our Government

Public service attracts a special kind of individual. One interview question we ask of potential candidates is “what is your philosophy about City government?”

Their answers are always insightful.

- “It’s about people; I admire those who serve.”
- “I respect our folks who volunteer.”
- “I appreciate the boards that help City Council.”

Why do we serve?

The answer is simple - to uphold the public trust. As citizens demand more transparency, accountability and performance from their governments, our Division understands the importance of implementing best business practices, establishing relationships, and aligning priorities to meet our governance responsibilities.

Who do we serve?

In our Division, we serve internal and external stakeholders.

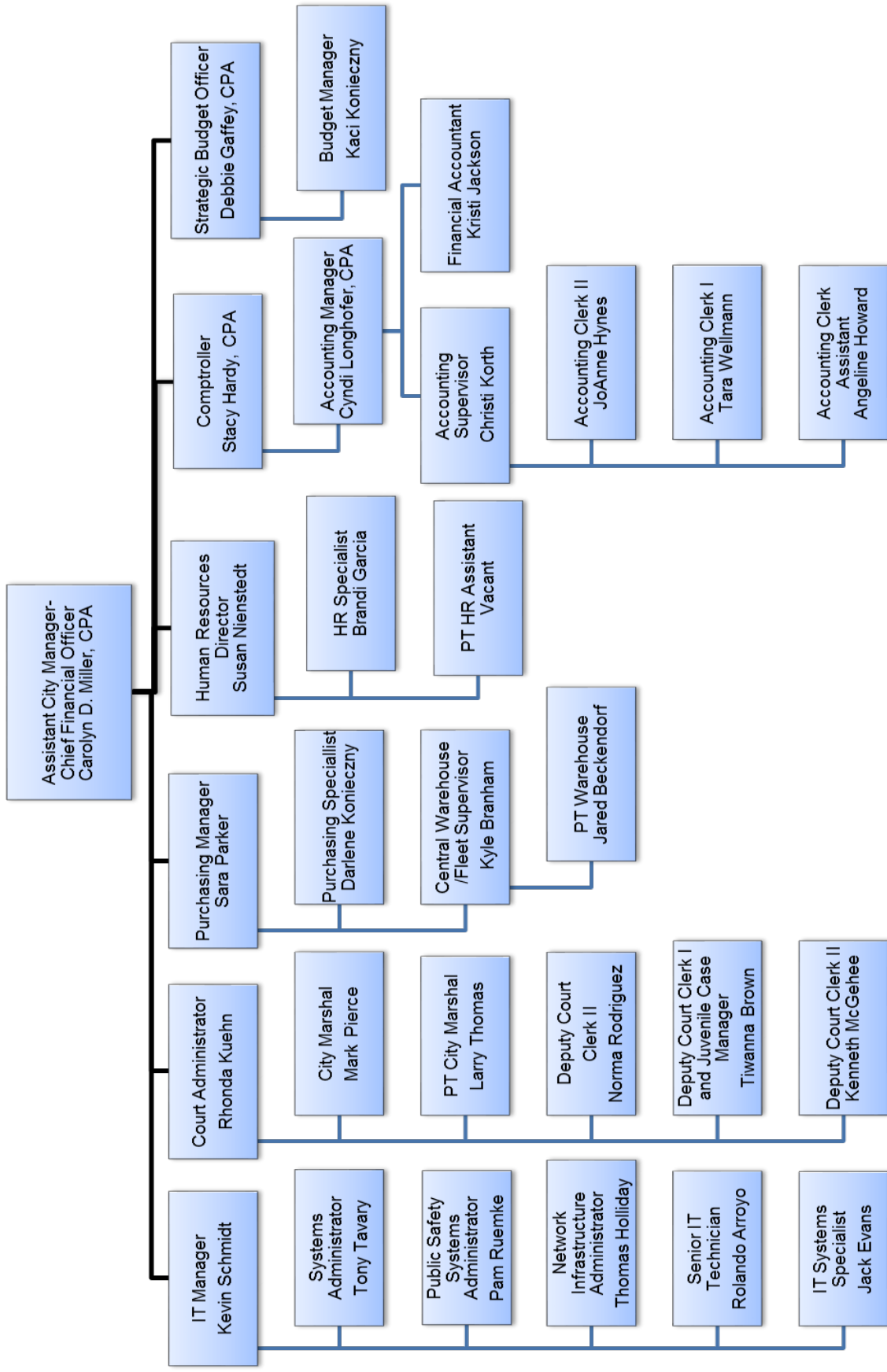
- Citizens of Brenham
- Those Elected to serve
- Those Appointed to serve
- Our fellow public employees

Creating a Culture for Public Service

Excellent leaders create a workplace where employees are inspired, encouraged and valued. They promote trust, build openness, and maximize the strengths of all team members. They build an expectation of performance and provide guidance that drives results. Our leadership team is committed to building a culture that uplifts our employees.

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| • Carolyn D. Miller, CPA | Assistant City Manager-Chief Financial Officer |
| • Stacy Hardy, CPA | Comptroller |
| • Debbie Gaffey, CPA | Strategic Budget Officer |
| • Susan Nienstedt, MS | Human Resources Director |
| • Cyndi Longhofer, CPA | Accounting Manager |
| • Kaci Konieczny, MS | Budget Manager |
| • Rhonda Kuehn, CMCC, CCM | Municipal Court Administrator |
| • Sara Parker, CPM | Purchasing Manager |
| • Kevin Schmidt | IT Manager |
| • Christi Korth | Accounting Supervisor |
| • Kyle Branham | Central Warehouse/Fleet Supervisor |

“The growth and development of people is the highest calling of leadership”.
Harvey S. Firestone



Challenges for Our City

In our Drive to 2025, we have identified three areas that present challenges for our City: legislative pressures to limit local control for Texas cities, sustainability of our strong financial position, and prioritizing and funding capital requests identified in Drive to 2025.

Legislative Pressures (information excerpted from TML Legislative Updates)

The anti-city agenda of the 85th Legislative Session posed significant concern in two major areas: property tax reform and annexation reform.

Property Tax reform: A revenue and/or spending cap would seriously damage public safety, economic development and transportation.

1. Cities are not the cause of high property taxes in Texas because cities collect only 16 percent of the property taxes paid by Texans statewide. That is why imposing a state cap on city revenues will not provide any meaningful tax relief. The real problem is skyrocketing local school taxes caused by the state's failure to adequately fund education. The burden of local school district taxes will continue to grow over the next two years. While trying to mislead Texans and shift the blame to cities, the legislature approved a state budget in May that calls for a 13 percent increase in local school property taxes.
2. Imposing a statewide cap on city revenues will not provide tax relief for homeowners but it will harm public safety, job creation and transportation funding. The largest item in every city budget is funding for police, fire fighting and emergency medical services – as much as 70 percent of the budget in some cities. Any state restrictions on city budgets will impact the ability to hire more personnel, improve salaries and benefits, upgrade technology and replace outdated equipment.
3. State restrictions on city revenues will reduce or eliminate discretionary spending on economic development incentives that help attract and retain job-creating businesses. Revenue restrictions will force cities to reduce or eliminate local funds that subsidize state highway construction projects which will increase traffic problems in urban areas.

Annexation reform: Legislative proposals that create major obstacles to municipal annexation would damage the state's economy.

1. Texas annexation laws have been fine-tuned over the past 100 years to provide an efficient and orderly way to deal with population growth, which is now increasing more than ever.
2. The proof that annexation is working well is in the results: year after year, Texas cities are among the national leaders in attracting new businesses and new residents.
3. When cities are prevented from expanding their boundaries, as we've seen in other parts of the country, the city core declines and the region enters a slow economic death spiral.

Sustainability of Strong Financial Position

The City of Brenham ended fiscal year 2017 with healthy reserves in the General Fund (121 days) and maintained 60 days or more of working capital in our utility funds. Standard & Poor's affirmed our AA- bond rating citing the City's strong financial management policies, strong budgetary performance, and strong liquidity.

Our diverse economic base allowed us to weather the economic disruption resulting from prolonged low oil and gas prices and the temporary shutdown of the Blue Bell facility in fiscal 2015. Despite the slowdown, taxable property value growth remained stable as well as residential and commercial building activity. Sales tax revenue is rebounding along with hotel occupancy tax revenue.

However, to sustain our strong financial position, we need to focus on strategic initiatives that provide revenues for ongoing operations and maintenance in general government services. We have discussed with Council the opportunity to impose sales tax on residential electric and gas customers, and implementation of a street assessment and/or drainage fee for infrastructure maintenance.

On a more strategic level, retail economic development projects have begun to emerge along the Hwy 290 and Hwy 36 corridor. Our approach needs to be cohesive, comprehensive and competitive to identify, market to and recruit our target industries, commercial businesses, and retail businesses. Our EDF partnership should also be evaluated and streamlined to minimize redundancy and confusion for development partners. Also the Economic Development Team (Assistant City Manager-Chief Financial Officer and Community Services Director) will be furthering their professional development in this area.

Prioritizing and Funding Capital Requests Identified in Drive to 2025

Once the City Manager reviews the Drive to 2025 plans, the Finance and General Administration Division will be tasked with developing a matrix of capital projects to facilitate prioritizing and funding by City Council. This matrix will include capital project descriptions, fiscal year impact, as well as the source of funding (i.e. debt financing, BCDC funding, grants, etc.).

As we move into the FY2018-19 budget cycle and beyond, revenue and expenditure forecasting and existing debt retirements, will be an integral component for this matrix.

Information Technology

The Information Technology (IT) Department is responsible for maintenance and management of the City's computers, servers, telephone system, surveillance cameras, fiber optic, copper and wireless networks. In addition to hardware, the department also supports and maintains several enterprise-wide applications, including Microsoft Exchange, Incode, New World Systems, Laserfiche, TLETS, and file and printer sharing. The department is responsible for the network connectivity to over 30 buildings. This includes the installation, configuration, and maintenance of network switches, routers, and firewalls. The department provides helpdesk support for over 280 user accounts. We have a strong focus on maintaining network-wide security while accommodating the end users' needs and keeping our systems cost effective. Without the IT department, other City departments would have to be in charge of their own technology needs all the way down to the basic infrastructure. This would not be efficient, as there would likely be duplicate systems, duplicate work, and probably innumerable incompatibilities between systems. All-in-all, we believe we maintain the City's technology infrastructure to a much higher level than individual departments would be able to on their own.

Below is a summary of equipment that we support, up-to-date as of the time this was written.

- About 30 Buildings On City Network
- Roughly 40 Miles Fiber Optic Cable
- 285 Desktops & Laptops
- 230 Desk Phones
- 39 MDTs (Police/Fire)
- 129 Surveillance Cameras
- About 65 Body/Car Cameras (Police)
- 77 Servers
- 15 Disk Storage Arrays
- 74 Routers, Switches, Firewalls
- 67 Wi-Fi Access Points

The IT department cooperates with a variety of other local organizations Including:

- Brenham ISD
- Blinn College
- Washington County
- Brazos Valley Council of Governments
- Brenham Housing Authority
- Texas A&M University
- Somerville ISD
- Burton ISD
- Central Washington County Water Supply Corporation
- Educational Service Center Region 6

Information Technology (continued)

The IT department has six full time employees detailed below.

- **IT Manager: Kevin Schmidt**
 - Started with City IT department on August 10, 2009 as Network Infrastructure Administrator.
 - Promoted to IT Manager in Summer 2014.
 - Responsible For:
 - Employee Supervision, Direction, & Evaluation
 - Prepare & Maintain Department's Annual Budget
 - Design City-wide IT Infrastructure
 - Purchasing Decisions & Recommendations
 - Purchase Order Processing
 - Conduct Staff Meetings
 - Project Management
 - "Level 3" Support
 - Training
 - Texas A&M University - Telecom Engineering Technology Program (2009)
 - Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA) Training
 - ITIL Foundation Certification
 - Windows Server 2008 R2
 - Windows Server 2016
 - NetMotion Mobility
 - Ocularis 3.0

- **Systems Administrator: Tony Tavary**
 - Started with the City IT Department on June 2, 2014.
 - Responsible For:
 - Non-Public Safety Servers & Applications
 - Email System
 - Spam Filter
 - Active Directory
 - File Servers
 - Laserfiche
 - Web Filter
 - "Level 2" Support
 - Training
 - NT4 Workstation & Server
 - Windows 98
 - Windows 2000 Workstation & Server
 - Microsoft MCP Certification – Windows XP
 - Server 2003
 - Server 2008

Information Technology (continued)

- Microsoft MCITP Certification – Windows 7
- Server 2012
- Microsoft MCSA Server 2016
- CompTIA A+ Certification
- CompTIA Network+ Certification

- **Public Safety Systems Administrator: Pam Ruemke**
 - Started with City of Brenham on April 8, 1995.
 - Joined the IT Department on December 2013.
 - Responsible For:
 - Public Safety Servers & Applications
 - New World Systems & Zuercher Administrator
 - Police & Fire Mobile Data Terminals
 - Police Car & Body Camera Servers & Storage
 - File Servers
 - CJIS Compliance
 - Access Control
 - “Level 2” Support
 - Training
 - Advanced Peace Officer
 - Intermediate Arson Investigator
 - Master Telecommunications Operator
 - TCIC/NCIC Associate Instructor
 - TTY/ADA Instructor
 - TCOLE Instructor
 - Management/Supervisor Training
 - Washington County Leadership
 - Collection and Preservation of Evidence
 - Forensic Fire Death Investigation
 - Human Trafficking
 - Youth Firesetter Intervention Specialist – Certificate
 - Terrorism & Homeland Security
 - Emergency Management
 - Budget and Planning Strategies
 - Incident Command (FEMA 100, 200, 00, 400, 700, 800)
 - Configuring & Administering Hyper-V in Windows Server 2012
 - Exchange 2013
 - Installing and Configuring Windows Server 2012

- **Network Infrastructure Administrator: Thomas Holliday**
 - Started with City IT Department on March 21, 2016.
 - Responsible For:
 - Network Equipment

Information Technology (continued)

- Phone System
 - Fiber Optic & Copper Data Cable
 - Surveillance Cameras
 - Wireless Networks
 - Internet & Interagency Connectivity
 - “Level 2” Support
- Training
 - Cisco Certified Network Associate (CCNA)
 - CompTIA Network+
 - CompTIA Security+
 - Army (6 years)
- **IT Systems Specialist: Jack Evans**
 - Started with City IT Department on March 5, 2018.
 - Responsible For:
 - End-User Support
 - Desktops & Laptops
 - Printers
 - Software Deployment
 - Server Hardware Monitoring
 - Backup Monitoring
 - “Level 1” Support
- **Senior IT Technician: Rolando Arroyo**
 - Started with City IT Department on January 9, 2017.
 - Responsible For:
 - End-User Support
 - Desktops & Laptops
 - Printers
 - Replacement PCs
 - Antivirus Monitoring
 - Software Deployment
 - “Level 1” Support
 - Training
 - Spartan First Responder (EMS)
 - Active Shooter Training
 - CPR (Expired)

All staff members in IT “wear any hats” and we regularly work together on complex projects. We are also housed together at City Hall in the same area to promote teamwork and communications. IT staff are required to document their work in a location that can be accessed by all IT staff. These things help cross-training happen naturally, although there is room to further improve with cross-training.

Information Technology (continued)

Ideally the Senior IT Technician would be an ideal candidate to move up into the IT Systems Specialist position, if it were to open up. We have designed the IT Systems Specialist position to potentially be a good start to moving up into an Administrator position, if one should open up. We have requested an additional position to be added to the department that would effectively be another specialist position that would be tailored to moving up into the Public Safety Systems Administrator or Network Infrastructure Administrator position if the opportunity should arise.

Our department excels in technical work and we have many accomplishments. We have a highly skilled and knowledgeable staff, especially for an organization our size. Staff members have told me that they are proud to be a part of such a mighty team that gets things done.

Our unrelenting workload can affect staff morale negatively. We regularly have vacancies that affect our ability to get projects done in a timely manner. Maintenance tasks are ignored when there is not enough time to accomplish all tasks. Not keeping our systems maintained with upgrades and software patches can result in devastating outages if we were to be infected with a virus. The staff members regularly ask for additional help, and there is often not enough time in the day or “boots on the ground” to keep things moving at the needed pace.

IT often finds out about “surprise projects” late in the game. We have not had a voice at the leadership table in the past, and I feel that we should be brought into large projects at the launch.

Often, IT staff members are not able to break away for training because of the highly demanding workload. Unexpected problems with equipment also have a drastic effect on the staff's ability to continue working on other projects. We often have to change focus on whatever is most pressing, leaving other low priority projects to sit and wait indefinitely.

The City of Brenham does not allow for any training and certification incentives for IT staff. Many IT certifications are highly sought after in the industry, and the opportunity to gain certification-based pay would incentivize training and also help retain the most qualified employees

The IT department has two vehicles to be shared with five staff people who are authorized to use them. There is a 2017 five-passenger van and a 2005 four-door pickup truck. The 2017 van is meeting our needs now that we were able to purchase it to replace our 2001 van, which was rusting and experiencing regular mechanical failures. The 2005 truck is currently meeting our needs. We will need to budget for a replacement vehicle at some point in the next 7 years, simply due to the age of the vehicle. In the past, our vehicle replacement policy has been based off of when the vehicle starts to become unreliable.

Information Technology (continued)

We support equipment in roughly 30 buildings and there are often not enough vehicles and IT staff must use their personal vehicle to reach a location. We may need to consider adding a third vehicle for the IT department to have on hand to prevent IT staff from having to carry around expensive equipment and tolls in their own personal vehicles when doing their daily work.

At this point, with our current scope of work, I would like to see our department grow by one member as soon as it is feasible. I explained earlier that I would like to add a specialist position in order to have more staff available to accomplish tasks that are waiting and also have a better cross-training and succession ladder built in to our ranks.

I would like to continue our other policies, especially the five-year equipment schedule on all City computers. This plan provides a detailed look into what IT purchase will be needed each year into the foreseeable future.

Municipal Court

Department Overview

The Municipal Court is a statutory court created by the Texas Legislature. It has exclusive criminal jurisdiction over Class C misdemeanor cases arising out of the Transportation Code, Penal Code, Alcoholic Beverage Code, Education Code, Health & Safety Code and the City Code of Ordinances and that occur within the territorial limits of the city. In addition, the Municipal Court has limited civil jurisdiction for bond forfeitures, junked motor vehicle hearings, nuisance abatement hearings, stolen property hearings, cruelly-treated animal hearings and dangerous dog hearings.

Purpose

The primary purpose of the Municipal Court is to interpret laws and administer appropriate justice in a fair, impartial and ethical manner while protecting individual's rights, preserving public safety, protecting quality of life, and deterring future criminal behavior. The secondary purpose of the Municipal Court is to effectively and efficiently generate and process all cases filed with the Municipal Court.

Mission Statement

The Brenham Municipal Court's mission is to provide access to a fair and impartial judicial system that is dedicated to administering justice with the utmost respect, integrity and professionalism while providing excellent customer service in an effective and efficient manner so that public trust and confidence in the judicial system is upheld.

Staff

Municipal Court staff consists of:

Rhonda Kuehn - Court Administrator - 21 years of service (full-time)

- Level 3 Certified Municipal Court Clerk – Municipal Court Clerk Certification Program, Texas Municipal Courts Education Center & Texas State University
- Certified Court Manager - Institute for Court Management – National Center for State Courts, Williamsburg, Va.
- Obtains 20-40 hours of continuing education per year from the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center, Texas Court Clerks Association & various other organizations
- Member of Texas Court Clerks Association, Texas Municipal Courts Association & National Association of Court Managers

Norma Rodriguez – Deputy Court Clerk & Spanish Court Interpreter - 10 years of service (full-time)

- Level 2 Certified Municipal Court Clerk – Municipal Court Clerk Certification Program – Texas Municipal Courts Education Center & Texas State University
- Obtains 12-20 hours of continuing education per year from the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center, Texas Court Clerks Association & various other organizations
- Member of Texas Court Clerks Association

Municipal Court (continued)

- Is cross-trained to handle some of the Court Administrator responsibilities

Tiwanna Brown – Deputy Court Clerk & Juvenile Case Manager – 5 years of service (full-time)

- Level 1 Certified Municipal Court Clerk – Municipal Court Clerk Certification Program – Texas Municipal Courts Education Center & Texas State University
- Obtains 12-20 hours of continuing education per year from the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center, Texas Court Clerks Association & various other organizations
- Member of Texas Court Clerks Association
- Is cross-trained to handle most of the Deputy Court Clerk responsibilities

Kenneth McGehee - Deputy Court Clerk – 3 years of service (full-time)

- Level 2 Certified Municipal Court Clerk – Municipal Court Clerk Certification Program – Texas Municipal Courts Education Center & Texas State University
- Obtains 12-20 hours of continuing education per year from the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center, Texas Court Clerks Association & various other organizations
- Member of Texas Court Clerks Association
- Is cross-trained to handle some of the Deputy Court Clerk responsibilities

Mark Pierce – City Marshal – 10 years of service (8.5 years with the PD & 1.5 years with the Court) (full-time)

- Master Peace Officer's License – Texas Commission on Law Enforcement
- Court Security Specialist – Texas Commission on Law Enforcement
- Obtains 20 hours of continuing education per year from the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement & Texas Municipal Courts Education Center
- Member of Texas Marshal's Association
- Is cross-trained to help answer general court questions and provide info.

Larry Thomas – City Marshal – 37 years of service (6 years with other law enforcement agencies, 10 years with PD and 21 years with the Court) (part-time)

- Master Peace Officer's License – Texas Commission on Law Enforcement
- Obtains 20 hours of continuing education per year from the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement & Texas Municipal Courts Education Center
- Member of Texas Marshal's Association
- Is cross-trained to help answer general court questions and provide info.

Luke Cochran – Prosecuting Attorney -1 year of service (part-time)

- Obtains 12-16 hours of continuing education per year from the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center

Bill Kendall – Presiding Judge – 10 years of service (8 years as Prosecuting Attorney & 2 years as Judge) (part-time)

- Obtains 16-20 hours of continuing education per year from the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center
- Member of Texas Municipal Courts Association

Municipal Court (continued)

Robert Wright – Associate Judge – 13 years of service (part-time)

- Obtains 16-20 hours of continuing education per year from the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center
- Member of Texas Municipal Courts Association
-

Judges Responsibilities

Preside over arraignment and pretrial hearings

Preside over Bench and Jury trials

Preside over all junked motor vehicle hearings, nuisance abatement hearings, stolen property hearings, cruelly-treated animal hearings and dangerous dog hearings

Conduct Jail Magistrations and Arraignments at WCSO

Review and Consider all Written Requests from Defendants

Review all Other Processed Case File Paperwork

Sign Judgments, Court Orders and Other Process as Issued by the Court

Prepare Jury Charges for Jury Trials

Prosecutor Responsibilities

Review and Investigate the Facts Surrounding Alleged Offenses and Determine Sufficient Grounds to File Charges

Prepare and Present the State's Case to the Court during Bench and Jury Trials

Arrange for the Appearance of State's Witnesses, including Requests for Subpoenas and Attachments

Make Motions before the Court for Continuances for the State and Other Motions that may be Necessary

Make Motions to the Court for Dismissal of Cases under Proper Circumstances

Advise the Police Department in Case Preparation, Legal Procedures/Requirements and Other Legal Questions

Discuss Pending Cases with Defendants/Attorneys prior to the courtroom hearing or at pretrial hearings

Court Administrator Responsibilities

Directs the day-to-day work of the deputy court clerks and the City Marshal

Processes various documents, including complaints, failure to appear warrants, probable cause affidavits, summons, subpoenas, and warrants, and prepares related reports.

Performs various bookkeeping duties, including receiving payments for various fines and fees, entering payment information into computer, making deposits, and preparing payment reports

Accepts pleas, time payments, payment extensions, and jail credit, and enters related information into computer

Composes and prepares correspondence

Prepares and mails certified conviction notices and certified letters for bench trial, and jury trial cases

Summons jurors for scheduled jury trials, checks jurors in for trials, and explains trial procedures

Municipal Court (continued)

Prepares annual municipal court budget

Communicates with and answers questions for the public

Maintains internal controls in all areas supervised; adheres to segregation of duties; and makes recommendations for improvements as necessary

Establishes written policies and procedures to guide the areas supervised

Provides leadership and strategic direction for the areas supervised to provide input for staff performance expectations and department goal setting

Deputy Court Clerk Responsibilities

Assists in maintaining docket folders for all court cases, including recording defendant pleas, fines owed and paid, time payment plans and extension dates, and status of warrants, and enters related information into computer

Enters traffic citations and class C misdemeanors into computer

Responds to questions and provides information about the status of court cases, fines owed, and general court procedures

Makes appointments for defendants to appear before the judge

Receives fine payments, issues receipts, and enters payment information into computer and docket files

Assists in preparation and filing of paperwork related to defensive driving courses, deferred disposition, and community service and explains the process and the paperwork to defendants

Opens and processes daily mail and related paperwork, including defendant correspondence, requests for payment extensions, and fines

Performs various administrative duties, including preparing and mailing correspondence related to court cases, making photocopies, faxing documents, and filing

Assists with collection of warrant fines, including recalling warrants by telephone, setting up payment plans, and answering questions related to the status of warrants

Assists in recording warrant activities, including amounts collected, payment plans, community service, and dismissals

Assists in scheduling and maintaining the docket for bench and jury trials, including printing and mailing jury summons and certified notices to appear and receiving and filing juror exemptions

Communicates with and answers questions for the public

City Marshals Responsibilities

Executes warrants of arrest, subpoenas and other legal process issuing out of the Municipal Court

Executes other warrants of arrest, subpoenas and legal process as determined by the Court Administrator

Researches names, addresses and places of work for wanted persons

Prepares and files arrest, incident and other reports as required

Transports inmates when required

Serves as bailiff and security officer in the Municipal Court

Serves as coordinator and supervisor of the Municipal Court Community Service Program

Municipal Court (continued)

Conducts warrant service such as home visits and makes telephone calls to notify defendants with outstanding warrants

Place Detainers on Prisoners in Other Jail Facilities

Pickups and Transports Paperwork between Washington County Jail/Communications/Municipal Court

Print Offense Reports for Prosecutor's Review

Communicates with and answers questions for the public

New Employee Background Checks for Human Resources

Vendor Permit Background Checks for City Secretary's Office

City Hall Security

Succession Planning

The Court has had the opportunity to do some succession planning over the past couple of years. The opportunity came about when City Marshal Larry Thomas announced that he would be retiring in 2016. He and I had several conversations about two years prior to his retirement. We discussed the timeline for his retirement and I shared with him that we needed to develop a plan for how we would handle his replacement. We both agreed that we needed to plan in advance so that we could budget extra funds to allow us to interview, hire and train his replacement prior to Marshal Thomas retiring. The plan worked well and went rather smoothly as planned. This experience reinforced the importance of succession planning and I have encouraged other court staff to give ample notice if they are considering retirement and can plan it in advance.

Strengths

Customer Service – The Court staff receives many compliments from the public on the customer service that the staff provides to citizens.

Communication – Better communication over the past couple of years to defendants about their court cases and options has increased their understanding of the court system.

Online Services - The Court added additional online services to allow for more flexibility when a citizen handles their court case. These features have resulted in increased compliance by defendants.

Other Agency/Departmental Cooperation – The Court maintains a good working relationship with many other agencies as well as City departments in various capacities. Though at times relations can be strained between the City and County as a whole, the Court continues to work well with County departments to get the job done. Some of these agencies/departments include Washington County Sheriff's Office, Washington County Communications, Blinn College Police Department, Brenham Police Department and City of Brenham Recycling and Collection Station.

Staff Diversity – Our department is unique because of the diversity of our staff. It is comprised of individuals of different racial backgrounds which makes us more approachable to our defendants, especially minorities.

Municipal Court (continued)

Weaknesses

Technology – The Court is not utilizing the technology it has to its fullest potential which makes for less efficient processes.

Shortage of Staff – The Court does not have the required amount of staff to complete all of the tasks that are needed to process cases effectively and efficiently.

Lack of Community Services Options – Even though we have our own community service program, our court still lacks viable community service site options. With our in-house program, individuals can only obtain 8 hours of credit per month which can greatly lengthen the time it will take a defendant to close their case.

Opportunities

Citizen Feedback

Last year, the Court was invited by the National Center for State Courts to participate in an attempt to gather information from citizens on their experiences with and perception of Municipal Courts in Texas. The Center provided the questionnaires to place in our lobby. The Court gathered the questionnaires and reported the public's responses back to the Center. Questions such as what improvements could the Court make to enhance the citizen's experience were asked. This was a great opportunity for the Court to obtain customer feedback and implement changes based on those experiences.

Community Outreach

In recent years, State organizations have encouraged Municipal Court staff to become more active in their communities by educating citizens on topics such as traffic safety, drug trends, student bullying, mental health and on the court system in general. While the Brenham Municipal Court staff has been invited to speak to civic organizations and schools as well as attend community events in the past, the opportunity to better develop a community outreach program exists and would greatly enhance the public's perception of the Municipal Court system as well as the City of Brenham.

Texas Legislature

The City of Brenham has a great opportunity to be a leader in guiding legislation and giving our city a voice on issues that affect not only the Municipal Court, but also other city departments. The City of Brenham is the largest city in our Representative's district and we have no organized means or mechanism to submit information to our Congress people for potential legislation to be proposed or on how legislation will impact our department's processes unless we attempt to contact them on an individual basis.

Threats

Texas Legislature

Whereas, the Texas Legislature is an opportunity for our City, it can also be a threat for our City. The Legislature is constantly placing mandates, many unfunded, on our cities. These new laws require additional procedures costing our cities more money to implement and place a greater demand on court staff to carry out those mandates. Legislators seek little to no input from the cities they represent when proposing legislation

Municipal Court (continued)

which makes it all the more important for our City to be more proactive in communicating our needs to our Congress people.

What could we do better?

The Court could better utilize the technology it currently has to become more efficient in the day to day tasks that need to be completed.

Communicate to our Legislature on issues that could potentially impact our City.

Continuously survey the public to get their insight and feedback as to how we could improve our operations and strive to implement possible changes.

Hold more regular staff meetings to better communicate issues to all staff.

Take the time to research non-profit organizations in our community to determine if they may be viable community service site options.

Best Practices

To ensure that all citizens are treated equally, the Court has written standing orders, policies and procedures for the staff to utilize when processing cases. In addition, the staff has access to several organizations such as the Texas Municipal Courts Education Center, Texas Court Clerks Association, Texas Municipal Courts Association, and the Texas Marshal's Association. The Court also has access to several publications such as the Texas Criminal and Traffic Law Manual, the Bench Book, Municipal Court Clerks Procedures & Reference Guide, Financial Management Handbook, Black's Law Dictionary and the City's Code of Ordinances.

Education plays a very important role in maintaining quality, well-trained staff. Each year, funds are budgeted so that all Court staff may obtain the required education and training that is necessary to remain proficient in new and current laws, policies and procedures, as well as current issues or trends.

Tasks

Brenham Municipal Court Community Service Program

The Municipal Court established a Community Service Program in 2000 as there were limited community service site options available for defendants to complete community service in lieu of paying their fines and fees. The program is held once a month on Saturday from 8 am to 5 pm with the exception of April in which it is held twice per month in conjunction with the City and County-wide clean up. The program is supervised by Larry Thomas and defendants earn a total of 8 hours of credit per Saturday. The program averages 10-15 people per work day. It mostly consists of defendants picking up trash in several areas around town as well as assisting citizens with their drop-offs at the Collection Station and Recycling Center. Occasionally other city departments will request that community service workers perform various tasks such as painting trash cans, benches and bleachers.

In 2005, the Municipal Court partnered with the Texas Department of Transportation in the Adopt-A-Highway Program. The program is responsible for trash pickup in a 3-mile stretch on FM 577 from its intersection with Hwy 36 to Brenham Middle School.

Municipal Court (continued)

Additional Tasks/Duties

Over the past few years, the Municipal Court has performed additional tasks that are not typically performed by Court staff. These tasks include running background checks using Accurant for all new hires processed by Human Resources as well as running background checks using Accurant on all permit applications received by the City Secretary's office.

Facilities

The Municipal Court offices and courtroom are located inside City Hall. At the present time, the Court office space is adequate for the current amount of staff. However, as the City and Court experience growth overtime, there may be a need in the future to expand the office space and customer service window to accommodate additional staff.

The Municipal Court currently shares space that serves as the City Council Chambers and Municipal Courtroom. For the most part, the size of the room is adequate for Court arraignments, pre-trial hearings and bench trials. However, this space is quickly becoming inadequate for jury trials due to the number of people (defendants, witnesses, jurors and staff) required to attend a jury trial. As the city grows, a bigger space redesigned with traffic flow and efficiency in mind may be necessary.

Equipment/Vehicles

Handheld Ticket Writers

The Municipal Court uses Court Technology funds to purchase and maintain 15 handheld ticket writers and printers for the Brenham Police Department (14) and Brenham Fire Marshal (1). These devices are set up on a maintenance plan in which every year the Court budgets to replace 2-4 ticket writers depending upon price at the time of purchase. This allows the older ticket writers to be replaced by newer, more efficient models. Printers are replaced as needed.

Vehicles

The Municipal Court fleet has the following vehicles:

2017 Ford Explorer – assigned to Marshal Pierce. Replacement of this vehicle will be reviewed and considered in 5 years.

2006 Dodge Ram Truck – assigned to Marshal Thomas. Replacement of this vehicle is being reviewed and considered this year.

2006 Ford 12-Passenger Van – assigned to Marshal Thomas to transport defendants who are scheduled to perform community service with the Municipal Court Community Service Program. Replacement of this vehicle is being reviewed and considered this year.

Future Outlook

By **2020**, hiring additional staff to meet the growing demands of the City as well as Legislature mandates that may be put into effect will need to be considered. Issues with current technology needs to be resolved so that staff can utilize it to its fullest potential.

Municipal Court (continued)

By **2023**, the space of the courtroom/council chambers may need to be increased in size to allow for an increase in the number of people required to attend certain court dockets. The court may also need to consider adding virtual technological enhancements for handling court cases.

By **2025**, we may see a change in staff members. One or both judges as well as the Court Administrator and a deputy clerk may retire. Additionally, the customer service window may need to be increased in size to meet the demand of an increase in case load.

Purchasing Services

Purchasing services manages acquisitions for the City, acting as the gatekeeper for decentralized purchasing to achieve Best Value and maintain the City's integrity throughout the purchasing process. Purchasing advises on the best purchasing method for the need, maintains vendor information and qualifications, negotiates terms and conditions for contracts and handles formal bids and proposals. Purchasing also processes purchase orders from requisitions for all departments, obtaining correct approvals and reviewing for compliance with purchasing policy

Purchasing also operates the Central Warehouse, maintaining a perpetual inventory system, determines items to be kept in inventory and appropriate levels, orders inventory items, and disburses supplies. The Warehouse also disposes of surplus, obsolete or unserviceable equipment and materials.

Without Purchasing Services, responsibility for compliance with State and local purchasing policy would fall on each department. Lack of in-depth knowledge and training could easily result in errors that would put the City in jeopardy and possibly result in legal action. Departments would be burdened with time-consuming tasks that would interfere with their primary functions. Duplication of effort would occur and Best Value for the City would be difficult to achieve.

PERSONNEL

3 Full Time, 1 Part Time

Sara Parker – Full Time Purchasing Manager- 4 years in April, 2018 – C.P.M. (Certified Purchasing Manager-Lifetime), NIMS Training for Senior-Level Response Manager

Veteran of more than 20 years in the purchasing profession, including 10 years in municipal government. Partially cross-trained in specific functions of the Purchasing Specialist and Central Warehouse.

Darlene Konieczny – Full Time Purchasing Specialist – 33 years

During her long career with the City, Darlene has held positions in both Accounting and Purchasing. Training has mainly been hands-on and she is knowledgeable in many functions and how they fit together interdepartmentally in the City. Cross-trained in many of the functions of the Central Warehouse and Purchasing Manager.

Kyle Branham – Full Time Warehouse Supervisor – 10 years in June 2018-Certified Forklift Operator – GovDeals Seller –TML Supervisor's Academy

Warehouse Supervisor for 7 years. Prior to promotion, he was a mapping technician for Public Utilities. Key to the reorganization of the warehouse and implementation of the

Purchasing Services (continued)

WASP system for inventory control and internal materials management starting in 2011. Fully trained in all warehouse functions and is currently working to obtain CPPB (Certified Professional Public Buyer) Certification. Cross training in Buyer functions is in progress.

Jared Beckendorf – Part Time Central Warehouse – 4 years in June 2018-Certified Forklift Operator.

Fully trained and capable of performing his own duties and most of the tasks and functions required for day-to-day operation of the Warehouse. Cross-trained in many of the Supervisor's duties to the extent that he can cover in the Supervisor's absence, requesting assistance from other Purchasing Personnel as needed.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

Succession planning has recently begun to be addressed. Kyle Branham has expressed interest in taking on more responsibilities. Central Fleet functions are being transitioned to the Central Warehouse from Maintenance with the hand-off scheduled for the beginning of April. The Central Warehouse will then be responsible for issuing equipment and billing all departments for fleet rental. In addition, we plan to transfer most of the functions for buying vehicles and equipment to Kyle as well. This will provide the opportunity to train him in more Buyer functions. This will leave Darlene and Sara able to focus on other goals, which will be outlined later in this report.

Right now, the department is vulnerable if any of our personnel are lost, regardless of the reason. This is being addressed by additional training and cross training, but it is likely that within the next 7 years, as the City and Purchasing continue to grow, an additional Buyer may be needed. This need will become apparent as other plans come to fruition. In the meantime, some support from an intern or a part-time or shared admin employee is needed to accomplish proposed projects and plans.

RESPONSIBILITY AND TASKS

- Review requisitions for policy compliance, obtain approvals, issue purchase orders
- Maintain vendor information, insurance certificates, obtain W-9's
- Obtain license plates, titles and other documentation on vehicles for asset records
- Issue required documents for vehicles sold on GovDeals
- Weekly PO report to CFO
- Maintain schedule of Contracts for renewal or bid
- Issue Formal Bids, assist departments in writing specifications
- Manage Bid Process from Advertising to Award and Contract or Purchase Order
- Review and negotiate terms and conditions of contract and agreements with help from City Attorney as needed

Purchasing Services (continued)

- Maintain Bid and Purchase Order documentation as required by Statute
- Arrange lease of copier equipment citywide and obtain council approval
- Maintain Bid, Performance and Payment Bond files for ongoing projects
- Hold Gold-level p-card and make purchases for departments with CFO approval
- Advise department personnel on purchasing policy and procedure.
- Assist department personnel with sourcing of goods and services for Best Value
- Maintain City membership and participation in purchasing cooperatives
- Assist department personnel in composing council agenda items for purchase approval
- Maintain physical organization of Central Warehouse
- Analyze and choose items to be included in inventory
- Set stock levels, order and stock items as needed
- Fill order requests from City departments
- Delivery supplies to City Hall and other departments when feasible
- Charge issued materials to appropriate departments
- Receive most freight deliveries for all departments
- Perform physical inventory for annual audit
- Dispose of surplus, obsolete or unserviceable materials and equipment through GovDeals online auction or other appropriate means

Time required to complete these tasks ranges from a few minutes on a sporadic, as-needed basis to weeks or even months to complete an order cycle for the warehouse or for Bids and RFP's. Personnel must prioritize and allocate their time in a flexible manner, being both proactive and reactive, as the situation requires.

FACILITIES

City Hall office space is adequate for current needs.

Central Warehouse is adequate for current needs. Building is old and may require more maintenance in coming years. As Fleet functions are added at the warehouse it will be practical and convenient to house Fleet vehicles and equipment at the Warehouse. We would like to consider adding a lean-to type covered storage area at the back of the building to house pipe that is awkward to keep inside due to its length. This would make space for Fleet equipment in both areas. We will get cost estimates and include this for consideration in a future fiscal budget.

EQUIPMENT

The forklift at the warehouse is relatively new and should be adequate for the foreseeable future.

Purchasing Services (continued)

The pickup truck is a 1999 model. Replacement has been put off for several years as the truck was running well. Replacement was requested for FY 2018 but was deferred. We would like to replace in FY2019 with a four-door model truck equipped with a lift gate. The lift would allow easier handling of heavy items and the extra seat would allow supply deliveries to be carried inside during bad weather.

SWOT ANALYSIS

The following is a general and brief analysis. The Plans and Proposals portion of the report which follows addresses this analysis and continues the SWOT format.

Strengths – Greatest strength is our employees. Experience and depth of knowledge. Integrity and mutual support. Willingness and dedication.

Weaknesses – Insufficient cross training. Department is very lean. Difficulty in covering early part of fiscal year when demand from other departments is highest. Decentralized purchasing does not always take advantage of purchasing expertise. Outmoded methods in workflow and document processing.

Opportunities – Training and growth in responsibility among current employees. Efficiencies and improvements. Utilization of technology.

Threats – Loss of any team member would place a heavy load on remaining employees until a replacement could be hired and trained. As the City continues to grow, current staff level and procedures may not be able to keep up with demands.

PLANS AND PROPOSALS

FY2018

- Add another Gold P-card for Purchasing Manager as backup for Purchasing Specialist. Covers occasions when Darlene is not in the office or when her card is compromised and must be replaced.

Addresses: **Weakness**- lack of depth

- Shift responsibility for vehicle and equipment purchases to Warehouse Supervisor. As part of Kyle's buyer training he will assist departmental staff to obtain quotes and will learn to conduct formal bids when required. He and Jared will also learn to handle the process of getting license plates and handling the rest of the documentation asset files. Combined with sale of old units through GovDeals this will give the Warehouse a "cradle to grave" path of responsibility.

Purchasing Services (continued)

Addresses: **Strength** – adding experience, cross training; **Threat** – mitigates high workload demand at beginning of fiscal year

- Explore whether Laserfiche can help with handling of Insurance Certificates. If possible, certificates would be scanned into Laserfiche and departmental staff would be able to access and, at the very least, determine if a vendor has current coverage on file. If Laserfiche cannot provide this function, then some form of software is needed to move this function from a manual paper file and this project might be pushed back to FY2019. When initiated, extra help from an intern or other admin employee would be helpful for this project.

Addresses: **Strength** –adds service for departments; **Threat**–lessens task overload

- Beginning this fiscal year, Purchasing will perform an annual review of City Purchasing Policy and Procedures. We will look for possible efficiencies and improvements and see that Local Policy is in line with the latest State statutes. Any actions will be reviewed with Administration for approval.

Addresses: **Strength** – streamlining of function and efficiency; **Threat** – prevents non-compliance

FY2019

- Beginning with the budget process for FY2019, Purchasing will have a greater presence in the planning process. Purchasing will meet with Directors and Supervisors after final management review of the budget to advise concerning procedure and to arrive at a realistic schedule under which all purchases and projects can be implemented. Where practical, bids, negotiation of terms and conditions and other processes may be begun prior to October 1. Purchasing will create a calendar of activity available to all Departments in order to facilitate processes.

Addresses: **Strength** – Give departments full benefit of purchasing expertise, **Threat** – prevents delays and cost escalation due to lack of timely action

- Over the past four years, the City has experienced increasing instances of late bids due to failure of courier or postal delivery to arrive on time. There have also been several weather related incidents where bidders were unable to submit bids in person. The best available solution is to be able to accept electronic bids. Software systems exist to provide this function and research is ongoing into which system would work best. There is at least one system available at no cost to the City.

Purchasing Services (continued)

Addresses: Opportunity – reduces chance of late bids, reaches more bidders;
Threat – Expense of rebidding, lack of competition

- The new website platform planned for purchase in FY2018 may provide opportunities to enhance bid posting, bid tabulation posting, tracking of bidders, and vendor registration online. If the new platform does not provide these opportunities, then software will be located that will provide these functions and budgeted accordingly. Purchasing is hampered by lack of these functions and progress and improvement require that we add these functions.

Addresses: **Opportunity** – enhanced efficiency, larger pool of bidders

FY2020

By Fiscal 2020, with these changes in workflow and process, Purchasing will be in a strong position to best benefit the City. We will work toward a clear path of succession and explore the possibility of expanding Purchasing functions as needed.

FY2023

As the City will have grown through projects and initiatives to reach new goals, Purchasing may also have grown with additional personnel. As a Department Purchasing Services will have become a functionally cohesive unit, stronger than the sum of its parts.

2025

By 2025 Purchasing may have undergone changes in personnel as well as function. A philosophy of continuing improvement and utilizing strengths will continue to make Purchasing Services the Best Value for the City of Brenham.

Human Resources

- *What do you do?, Why do you do it? What would happen if your department didn't exist?*

The Human Resources department's goal is to attract and retain well-qualified employees to best serve the residents of the City of Brenham. We strive to be a *resource* for our employees; the place to go when you have questions or concerns; from resume to retirement, HR is involved! The HR department has a love for helping people, our goal is for all employees to thrive and have a successful career with the City of Brenham. We take satisfaction in seeing others grow and enjoy their job!

Without the HR department employees would not have a friendly, safe place to ask questions and voice concerns.

- *What about your employees? How many?, How long have they been with the City, your department?, What is their training?, Who is cross-trained?, What type of succession planning is in place?*

Susan Nienstedt has been employed with the City of Brenham since 1999, she has worked in the HR department since 2007. Susan has a Master's degree from Texas A&M University in Educational Human Resource Development. Susan is a member of TMHRA, SHRM, and TXPRIMA to continue her education and training in municipal human resources and risk management.

Brandi Garcia has been employed with the City of Brenham since 2015, and had thirteen years prior HR experience with a private corporation. She is also a military veteran where she also worked in the HR area. Brandi holds a Professional Human Resource (PHR) certification from the Human Resources Certification Institute. She too is a member of TMHRA and SHRM to continue her education and training in the HR profession.

Between the two full time staff members, we have over 20 years of HR experience, and are cross-trained in most all aspects of our departmental functions. We work well as a team on various projects, and work independently to accomplish our many tasks and responsibilities.

Our Part time Human Resource Assistant position is currently vacant.

One of our current goals is to increase the amount of time spent with employees for orientation, training and development, and safety. We would like to coordinate a city-wide safety and training program so that as employees are hired, they are given the orientation and training they may need on the job. In addition, continued training is needed to remain up to date on knowledge and skills needed to complete their job safely and successfully.

Human Resources (continued)

Supervisor training is a continued need that HR would also like to improve on. Our supervisors need resources and tools they can use to handle situations that may arise in their departments.

- *What are we responsible for?*

The HR process starts with recruitment for new employees. We communicate with the department supervisors, verify budget allowances for the position(s), create job descriptions, survey comparable cities for salary, advertise, collect online applications, schedule interviews with the hiring manager, participate in interviews, compile information for the background investigation, schedule pre-employment screenings, review new hire paperwork with the employee, complete mandatory verification of employment status, enter new employee information in ADP system, create employee building security badges, and enroll employees in multiple benefit plans such as group medical, dental/vision, Life, LTD, AD&D, TMRS coverages.

As an employee of the City of Brenham continues their career journey, they may ask HR for assistance with benefit questions, changing benefits due to a qualifying event, FMLA paperwork and processing, building security access, updating tax withholdings, changing direct deposit information, salary questions, worker's compensation claims, safety glasses program enrollment, voluntary benefits such as deferred compensation enrollment and changes, beneficiary information, Employee Assistance Programs, or general concerns and/or complaints they may have.

The HR department is responsible for the service recognition program throughout the year, when each full time employee is recognized for their years of service in 5 year intervals. This process involves a framed plaque for each employee signed by the Mayor presented to them at the City Council meeting the month of their service anniversary. Many of the service recognition awards for employees serving more than 10 years, will receive a monetary gift as well.

The HR department handles all reports of Worker's compensation injuries, forwards the first report of injury to TML, assess light duty accommodations, adjusting employee contributions to TMRS while out for WC injuries; follow up with departments to ensure safety and training are complete to reduce future injuries. We continually update and monitor our payroll and WC categories to ensure we our rates being paid to TMLIRP are accurate. Annually TML conducts an audit of our WC records to ensure compliance and accuracy. Each year WC rates and experience modifier are assigned by TMLIRP and we update them in our records, ADP, and in Finance for budgeting purposes.

HR processes all liability, auto, and personal injury damage claims, for both city property damage, and damage the city causes to citizen's property. Each claim is

Human Resources (continued)

accepted in the HR office, investigated with the department and either processed internally, sent to TMLIRP for payment, or denied.

Biweekly, the HR department enters all new hires in ADP, enters payroll changes such as promotions, transfers, demotions, rate changes, longevity, excess life insurance amounts for taxing purposes, certification pay, step increases. This process involves HR tracking all salary changes and scheduling step increases according to our compensation plan, obtaining departmental signatures, City Manager's signatures on salary status sheets, and entering the data into ADP before the payroll cycle is closed for the pay period. We track certification/licensing requirements, recommended vaccinations for specific jobs, and respiratory evaluations that are needed and notify departments of due dates and appointments.

Monthly the HR department collects retiree group medical insurance payments, updates the Life, LTD & AD&D premiums for taxing purposes and submits for payment to the vendor.

Quarterly the HR department conducts random drug/alcohol testing per the Department of Transportation for CDL drivers, the Texas Railroad Commission for our Gas department employees, and the city policy for safety sensitive positions. We verify that all part time employees are not working more than an average of 30 hours per week for the ACA requirements, and TMRS annual hours requirements, and notify supervisors as needed for part time or temporary employees being asked to work too many hours.

Annually the HR department conducts open enrollment for our group medical plan and dental/vision plan. We meet with each employee to discuss changes they may have for the next plan year, enroll them in flexible spending accounts or dependent care accounts as needed. This is completed in conjunction with our annual Health Fair, at which each employee is offered basic screening and vaccinations as well as a home cooked breakfast by our talented and dedicated employees. Open enrollment changes are then made for our group medical plan in the TML online system, our ADP payroll system for deduction changes, and our dental/vision vendor. The HR department is responsible for the reconciliation and reporting of the medical value on each employee's W2.

The HR department continuously maintains the personnel records both in paper and electronic form according to the city's approved records retention policy. We continually monitor our HR policy manual to comply with federal, state, and local laws. The last approved update of the HR policy by city council was in 2015. HR indicates areas of concern and potential changes continuously. Every three years the HR department is responsible for reporting our labor statistics to the Department of Labor

Human Resources (continued)

(EEO4 report). Every five years we conduct a full compensation study with an outside consultant.

- *Where do you see the department in 2020, 2023 and 2025? What will it take to get there?*

2020 is not that far away.....two years from today.....I hope to have a well-functioning department that provides excellent customer service to employees and citizens. Human Resources will provide a safe and friendly place for employees and citizens to come to with questions and concerns. Employee will seek out HR for assistance in not only benefits, but also in career advancement. We want to provide a resource for training, education, and skill building to assist employees in their career. We will start by spending more time with newly hired employees. New hire orientation will be spent with quality time in HR learning about the City of Brenham, getting to know their supervisor's expectations, and specific safety and/or training needed in the department they are joining. We strive to provide a solid safety-training program throughout the city to be the basis of all employee's education....let's be safe at work, pay attention to detail, and have pride in the work *you* are doing for *your* community!

Next, we will educate supervisors on how to help employees flourish, honest feedback and assessment, recognition for hard work, and opportunity to succeed!

We will need the department's support and understanding to accomplish this task. Investing the time in our newly hired employees to make sure they get the knowledge and skills they need to do a great job is important, and it will take more than a few minutes to complete paperwork to invest this time. The HR department is investing their time in these employees, and we want the department supervisors and manager to also invest their time. On-the-job training is imperative also and we want supervisors to pass on the knowledge and skills they have as well in the field.

- *What will it look like when we arrive?*

Awesomeness! 😊 Happy healthy working environment that shows on our employees' faces and in the work we complete in the community!

Accounting & Finance

1. Talk about your department; what you do? Why you do it? What would happen if your department did not exist?

What we do:

- People behind the scenes are just as important as those in the spotlight. The Accounting Department takes pride in providing information and being an invaluable resource to other departments who are on the front lines serving the citizens of our city.
- The backbone of the City's fiscal operations: daily transaction postings and financial reporting for 39 individual funds
- Annual audit and Comprehensive Annual Financial Report – have received GFOA Award for Excellence in Financial Reporting for 9 consecutive years
- Treasury management including daily reporting of bank account activity and investing excess cash
- Accounts Payable - pay vendors weekly, manage approximately 7,000 vendor payments per year
- Payroll – facilitate payroll processing between employees & supervisors and ADP - biweekly
- Accounts Receivable –monthly billing and payment collection for Sanitation department and various other City customers
- Fixed Assets –Track and account for over \$118 million in capital assets including land, infrastructure, buildings, vehicles and equipment
- Property and Liability Coverage for City owned vehicles, equipment, buildings, etc.
- Debt Management for 17 long-term debt issuances, including bonds, capital leases and promissory notes.
- Periodic financial reporting for boards, committees and ratings agencies: HOT Board, BCDC, Standard & Poor's, etc.
- Calculate property tax rate needed for annual city operations and debt repayment
- Prepare detailed reports for capital projects that are funded by debt issuance to ensure funds expended properly and funds are sufficient for project completion.
- Accounting and financial reporting for grants across all departments
- Responsible for the financial integrity of the Central Warehouse inventory values.

Accounting & Finance (continued)

Why do we do it?

- To protect the integrity of the City's finances; monitor transactions and procedures to ensure that fiscal practices comply with financial policies, ordinances and state statutes.
- To provide accurate and timely financial information to Council, City Manager, Citizens and staff so that City departments can run smoothly and information can be used in decision-making processes. Help management understand the financial impact of their decisions.
- To protect City's creditworthiness by making sure we are making timely payments to vendors, maintaining fund balances, and working capital at sufficient levels.

What would happen if your department did not exist?

- If the Accounting Department did not exist, functions would have to be outsourced and timeliness and, perhaps accuracy would be compromised.
- City department head jobs would be more difficult if financial information they need was unavailable, inaccurate or not available in a timely manner.
- State law requires that all general-purpose local governments publish, within 6 months of the close of the fiscal year, a complete set of audited GAAP financial statements. If the accounting department did not do this then an outside consultant or auditor would need to be hired to meet this requirement.
- Vendors would not be paid affecting the credit of the City.
- Although payroll is outsourced for the most part, without the oversight and reconciliation provided by the Accounting Department, errors in employees pay would be frequent.
- Inaccurate, late, or nonexistent financial reporting for council, regulatory agencies, ratings agencies, etc.

2. **What about your employees? How many? How long have they been with the City? With your department? What is their training? Who is cross-trained? What type of succession planning is in place?**

7 Employees:

Stacy Hardy, Comptroller – 11 ½ years with City, Bachelor's Degree in Accounting, Certified Public Accountant, trained in all areas of the Accounting Department and can serve as backup wherever needed

Cyndi Longhofer, Accounting Manager – 5 years with the City, Bachelor's degree in Accounting, Certified Public Accountant, trained in all areas of the Accounting Department with the exception of preparing the financial statements for the CAFR, fixed asset accounting and debt management, cross trained in Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, Payroll and wherever else needed

Christi Korth, Accounting Supervisor – 8 ½ years with the City, Bachelor's degree in General Business, trained in Accounts Payable, Payroll and General Ledger processing, cross trained in Accounts Receivable

Accounting & Finance (continued)

Kristi Jackson, Financial Accountant – 6 years with the City, Bachelor's degree in Management, trained in General Ledger accounting, Inventory accounting, Accounts Receivable and Fixed Assets; cross trained in Accounts Payable

JoAnne Hynes, Accounting Clerk II – 3 years with the City, trained in Accounts Receivable, Fixed Assets and General Ledger processing; cross-trained in Accounts Payable

Tara Wellmann, Accounting Clerk I – 2 years with the City, trained in Accounts Payable

Angeline Howard, Accounting Clerk Assistant – 5 years with the City, 2 years with the Accounting Department, transferred from Utility Billing, trained in customer service & general administrative duties for the accounting department; cross-trained in Accounts Payable

Cross training and Succession Planning: Our employees' work experience provides versatility to our department so that even if an employee is not cross trained in a specific area, they have the ability to quickly learn new tasks if needed. Key roles such as Comptroller and Accounting Manager will need to be hired externally when vacant.

3. **What are your strengths? Weaknesses? Opportunities? Threats? What are we doing that we should do better or stop doing? Any Best Practices?**

- **Strengths:**

- Our employees: strong work ethic, work well together and are always willing to pitch in where needed.
- Our focus on customer service: our customers are mostly City employees but we take pride in helping them get the information they need to do their jobs. We strive to provide accurate and timely information
- Versatility –because we work so closely with one another, usually anyone can help get the information a customer needs when asked or find out quickly who is the best person to help them.
- Organized and pay close attention to detail so information can be located quickly when needed.
- Accounting knowledge – although they may not be cross trained in every area, they have many years of experience in accounting departments so their general knowledge of all areas in accounting make us very flexible to call upon whoever is needed to spread the workload or work on special projects. We also have two CPAs (and 4 in the Finance Division as a whole).

Accounting & Finance (continued)

- **Weaknesses:**

- Incode training – Training for the accounting related modules in Incode is very limited so most of our employees have not been formally trained, only instructed from other employees. Still with the limited training, we are capable of performing all of our job functions.
- Governmental accounting training – with the exception of the CFO and Comptroller, other employees do not have specific governmental accounting training.
- We do not have a person specifically assigned to grant accounting and compliance. The compliance piece may not need to be someone in the Accounting Department.
- We do not have one person responsible for the City's fixed assets. Currently, accounting for fixed assets is split between three employees, which requires steady coordination to make sure nothing is overlooked.

- **Opportunities:**

- With more detailed Incode training we may be able gain some efficiencies.
- With some in-depth governmental accounting training, the Accounting Manager would be able to help with CAFR preparation and accounting for fixed assets and debt issuances.
- Transitioning to more electronic payments instead of manual checks for vendor payments could possibly create efficiencies in the accounts payable process and the bank reconciliation process.

- **Threats:**

- Without having a single contact for the coordination of all City grants, compliance in certain areas may be missed.
- Without having a single person responsible for the City's fixed assets, certain areas of accounting for these assets could be overlooked.

4. **What about our facilities, equipment and vehicles? Are they adequate? If not, what is needed and why? What is our replacement policy?**

- Facilities and equipment are adequate, will need cosmetic updates to area when funds are available (carpet, paint, etc.).
- Do not have any vehicles and none are needed.
- General office equipment, furnishings, computers, copier and software are updated and/or replaced as needed.

Accounting & Finance (continued)

5. Where do you see the department in 2020, 2023 and 2025? What will it take to get there? What is needed? And what will it look like when we arrive?

- 2020: The department will most likely look very similar to the current department. We do not anticipate and turnover or retirements prior to 2020. The Accounting Manager will have attended some governmental training classes and be more involved in CAFR preparation and fixed asset accounting. With coordination with the City Secretary's office, we will designate a person to be responsible for tracking all active City grants and the compliance necessary for each of them.
- 2023: Retirements could be possible in the Accounting Manager position by 2023. This position would be filled with another degreed accountant. We do not expect this, but if turnover occurs in the Financial Accountant or Accounting Supervisor positions, it would be beneficial to require a bachelor's degree in accounting for one of these positions. The Accounting Supervisor position would most likely be reclassified as a Senior Accountant and not have any direct reports. All accounting personnel with the exception of the Comptroller would report to the Accounting Manager. By 2023, we expect the department to rely even more on technology and less on paper in the areas of record retention and vendor payments.
- 2025: Retirement of the current Accounting Manager is probable by 2025. This position would be filled with another degreed accountant. Growth of the Accounting Department as a whole is dependent upon on the growth of the City, but with increased automation, technological efficiencies, rehiring positions with skilled employees, the current levels may still be appropriate.

Strategic Budgeting

1. What does the Strategic Budget Unit do?

a. We participate in strategic planning process and develop the long-range financial plan.
b. We help address any financial "Gap" between cost of city services and city resources.
c. We prepare the annual operating budget (year 1 of the 5+ year financial plan).
d. We review and set rates to cover cost of services.
e. We evaluate the city's performance to goals/objectives established in the planning process.
f. We prepare quarterly financial reports.
g. We assist various areas of the city in financial analysis.

2. Why do you do it?

<p>All businesses must be managed to ensure scarce resources are appropriately allocated to programs and services that best support the mission (e.g. reason for existing) of the entity. Management is the accomplishment of predetermined objectives through others. Strategic planning is the process by which management identifies and sets goals or objectives and defines its strategy or direction to achieve its goals. Strategies are developed through an internal assessment of the city's strengths and weaknesses and an external assessment of environmental (outside) opportunities and threats.</p> <p>The strategic plan establishes the context from which the long-range financial plan and one-year operating budget are developed. An annual operating budget is required by state statute and the city's charter.</p>

3. What would happen if your department didn't exist?

The budget document has to be prepared per Texas statute and city charter. If the department didn't exist, then some other department would have to pick up the work or an outside consultant would have to be hired to prepare the budget.

4. How many employees?

2 – Debra Gaffey and Kaci Konieczny

5. How long have they been with the City? Your department?

Name	Time with City	Time with Dept
Debra Gaffey	11 yrs, 1 mo	5 yrs, 9 mos
Kaci Konieczny	5 yrs, 3 mos	5 yrs, 3 mos

6. What is their training?

Name	Education	Other
Debra Gaffey	BS Accounting; BS Psychology	See resume (attached)
Kaci Konieczny	BBA Finance; MS Finance	See Resume (attached)

Strategic Budgeting (continued)

7. Who is cross-trained? What type of succession planning is in place?

Name	Cross-Training	Succession Plan
Debra Gaffey	In Progress	Is Kaci Konieczny
Kaci Konieczny	In Progress	New Hire

8. What are your departments SWOTs?

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi-City and private sector experience in strategic planning, forecasting & budgeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selling the importance of an integrated budget process (integrated into strategic planning) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving budget and financial transparency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When conflicts of interest result in loss of objectivity and influence direction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Software skills and analytical ability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Depth of understanding operating departments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improving financial communications with the public 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Losing Council trust
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Department relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frustration that emerges as intellectual arrogance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement GFOA practices; obtain Transparency Award; and maintain Budget Award 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Losing public trust

9. What are we doing that we should do better or stop doing? Any Best Practices?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spend more time looking forward and less time looking backwards Pay attention to what is happening outside of Brenham (look for emerging trends) Improve the budget document and implement recommended GFOA improvements Decide on "who" we compete with for human capital ... other Brenham businesses OR other cities? And if the answer is other cities, fix the retirement plan and offer affordable medical insurance alternatives Stop trying to balance the budget on the backs of employees Make employees feel important again Remember who you serve
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10. What are we responsible for? How long does it normally take?

See question 1 for responsibilities. The whole planning and budget process takes approximately nine to ten months. Kickoff for capital plans begins in February and the final budget document is finished by October or November. Monitoring of financial performance is ongoing.

11. Are facilities adequate?

Facilities are adequate; however, there are heating and AC challenges in the offices.

Strategic Budgeting (continued)

12. What about equipment and vehicles? Are they adequate? What is replacement policy?

Equipment is adequate. Computers are upgraded every 3-5 years. The City has a vehicle for staff use.

13. Where do you see your department in 2020, 2023 and 2025? What will it take to get there? What is needed? What will it look like when we arrive?

Same staffing for 2020 to 2025. Kaci will take over by 2023, if not sooner. The success of the department really depends on leadership. If the CM supports strategic development and budget integration, then the City will have a terrific future and the department will thrive.