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TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

JULY 28, 2022

CONTENTS



03

MESSAGE FROM THE
TOWN MANAGER

08

PARKS AND RECREATION

10

FIRE DEPARTMENT

11

LIBRARY

12

WATER DEPARTMENT

13

STREET DEPARTMENT

14

IT DEPARTMENT

MESSAGE FROM THE TOWN MANAGER



DIGITAL PAYSON

Digital Payson has seen many improvements over the past quarter thanks to the hard work by our various service providers, the working group, town staff, and many others. Most importantly the valuable feedback and involvement by the community addressing the digital needs of our community, along with addressing the various concerns and issues. While ongoing, over the 4th of July weekend our peak-of-peak period field tests were done by our First Responders, Digital Payson, and the community with all service providers to stress test the infrastructure, coverage, usage, and service availability. Throughout the testing of the wireless carriers AT&T and T-Mobile provided acceptable service, whereas Verizon had the same challenges as prior years with call, text, and data saturation.

Wired service providers (Lumen-CenturyLink, Optimum-Suddenlink, etc.) had varying service levels mainly due to the backhaul provider they used. Lumen-CenturyLink fiber appeared to be struggling as prior years, whereas Sparklight fiber had no reported issues.

APS received approval by the USFS to resume their fiber deployment from Phoenix and Joseph City to Payson, currently underway with some delays. New estimated completion date is spring 2023, depending on the USFS requirements.

AT&T FirstNet has been engaging with the Town on their FirstNet program for First Responders, along with upgrading their existing towers in the area to 5G with additional bands to improve coverage and performance.

Lumen-Century has seen several challenges over the past quarter, including at least five outages to basic phone service impacting town operations, businesses, and residents. There has been general extreme slowness in their Internet service, and numerous other problems. Digital Payson is having meetings to work through these issues and address resolving them. While automated switchover interconnection has been completed by Sparklight, still TBD from Lumen. Optimum-Suddenlink over the past quarter has continued with their infrastructure upgrades involving new nodes, node splits, fiber runs, multiple backhaul providers, and more. Reports from those on the upgraded nodes show stable performance at reliability at purchased service plan levels.

T-Mobile has completed their tower and infrastructure upgrades in Payson and surrounding Rim Country. All towers now have all five bands and increased tower segments. Plans are for additional towers over the next 18 months with two in progress to address coverage and usage. T-Mobile reports a 50% increase in Payson area network traffic since the beginning of this year. Their 5G Home Internet gateway is still a popular solution for many.

Sparklight has continued their regional fiber deployment within Payson and surrounding areas, providing services to business users with plans to provide Fiber to the Premise (FttP) for households. No reported incidents, either by the service to business or as a backhaul provider to other ISPs.

Sadly, the numerous grant applications submitted to the Arizona Commerce Authority were not approved. In fact, no grants were approved for Gila County. This included grant applications by cellular providers, Sparklight to provide Payson and Star Valley Fiber to the Premise (FttP) for households, or the MHA Foundation and the RCEF for a centralized vendor-neutral Internet Point-of-Presence (POP), Internet Exchange Point (IXP) Hub, and colocation facility.

Finally, the community involvement to the Digital Payson group on Facebook has been outstanding. It has become a source of collaboration among the community where ideas and information are shared, problems reported and addressed, along with best practices and experiences provided to benefit everyone.

Isaac Blake, Chair – Digital Payson



[WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/GROUPS/DIGITALPAYSON](https://www.facebook.com/groups/digitalpayson)
DIGITALPAYSON@PAYSONAZ.GOV

FIRE PREVENTION & FUELS MITIGATION

The TOP's community risk reduction strategy is a comprehensive approach that involves the identification, evaluation, planning, and action to help reduce a multitude of risks that exist for our community. For the purposes of this article, I wanted to provide some detailed information about the reduction of fuels. There has been a lot of talk about "Fire Wise" efforts in our community recently and I thought it might be helpful to provide some information about the Town of Payson's (TOP) efforts to work with the community to reduce fuels and mitigate the risks associated with wildfire.

Did you know that the Town owns more than 44 parcels of property that are over .4 of an acre in size? Each of these properties have recently been evaluated and prioritized by the Payson Fire Department. The Town plans to treat 71.24 acres of town owned property this fiscal year. The Town of Payson has applied for and received \$564,286 in grant funding, from 2021 through 2024, to assist property owners in treating private property. The Town has also applied for an additional \$592,100 in funding for fuels treatment; funding award notification should occur in August. Finally, the Town Council has authorized an additional \$304,100 in the Town's general fund budget for the fuels treatment program.

Property owners, including the Town of Payson, have a responsibility to maintain their property in compliance with the Town Code Title IX Chapter 92. The code requires the creation of a defensible space around residence and other structures to improve the chance of defending the structure in the event of a fire.

New sections of the Town Code are under development that would require specific fire retardant materials to be used in the construction process. The code development process has included meetings with contractors who have provided meaningful feedback on the code provisions, which will eventually require council approval if they are to become a requirement.



PARKS, RECREATION & TOURISM



THE WALL THAT HEALS

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A PROGRAM OF THE VIETNAM VETERANS MEMORIAL FUND
FOUNDERS OF THE WALL

PAYSON, ARIZONA

AUGUST 25-28TH

@ Rumsey Park South Field



OPEN 24 HOURS | FREE TO THE PUBLIC | CLOSURES SUNDAY @ 2PM

A replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C. Since its dedication, The Wall That Heals has been displayed at nearly 700 U.S. communities throughout the nation, spreading the Memorial's healing legacy to millions.

Learn More @ www.thewallthathealspayson.com



VISIT WWW.PAYSONRIMCOUNTRY.COM FOR ALL EVENT INFORMATION!

PARKS, RECREATION & TOURISM



THE FOOD TRUCK FESTIVAL & LASER SHOW



AUGUST 6, 2022
@ RUMSEY PARK | 11am-9pm

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| LIVE MUSIC & BEER GARDEN | NEW! LASER LIGHT SHOW |
| FOOD TRUCK LINEUP | BAND LINEUP |
| PHILLY UP BEVERAGE JUNKIES POKY'S COCINA FROSTED FRENZY DOG FATHER MY GYRO ROCK N ROLL LOBSTER | KETTLELICIOUS DINER ON WHEELS BEIGNET AND COFFEE KATHY HINTON FRYBREAD K STAR BBQ CULVER'S |
| | 11:00AM OUTSIDE THE LINE 1:30PM TAKE COVER 4:00PM DONNY GRUBB BAND 6:30PM MOONSHINE MAFIA |

WWW.PAYSONRIMCOUNTRY.COM

FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Fire Department recently said goodbye to Engineer Henry Jandayan. Engineer Jandayan was a 25 year plus employee of the Town having started as a volunteer and then being hired as an Engineer.

Captain Daniel Malloy has accepted a civilian Logistics position within the Fire Department and will be invaluable overseeing all our resources. These moves have resulted in some promotions.

Engineer Anthony Michelizzi has been promoted to Captain. Firefighters Jordan Hollenbeck and Jessica Saldana have been promoted to Engineer.

The new portable radios we were awarded with the Ft. McDowell Community grant are in and the department is receiving training.



LIBRARY

Mrs. Sianee Beyan Hawkins is married to The Reverend Thomas E. Hawkins and they have a son called George Hawkins. She began her career in the Library System in 2001 as a Clerical Assistant at The Detroit Public Library (DPL) in Detroit, Michigan. Upon graduation with her Bachelor of Arts in Information Systems Technology from the Wayne State University in 2006, she was promoted to Technology Training Associate in charge of a pilot program called “Grandparents Upgrade: Your Turn to Learn” (later changed to “Cyber Seniors Project”). This program was geared towards teaching technological and life skills to grandparents raising grandchildren and seniors 50 years old and over. She successfully grew the program from a few participants to 20 regular attendees with about 100 persons waiting list.

Mrs. Hawkins achieved her Master of Library and Information Science degree in 2013 and was subsequently promoted to Children’s Librarian at the Parkman Branch of the DPL. In 2016, she was elevated to Assistant Manager/Children’s /Youth Services of the Skillman Branch of the DPL until relocating to Buffalo, New York with her family in 2018. She worked with the Erie County Department of Social Services, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly known as Food Stamps) as Social Welfare Examiner.

Due to covid, the family moved to Columbus, Ohio where she worked with the State of Ohio Department of Job and Family Services – Pandemic Unemployment Agency (PUA) as PUA Adjudicator. Ms.s Hawkins moved to Payson, Arizona in June 2022 and started work with the Town of Payson Public Library. She is presently the Librarian in charge of Information Technology and Youth Services.



WATER DEPARTMENT

At approximately 4:30 PM on July 24th 2022 an 8-inch diameter PVC watermain split in front of 302 E. Aero Drive which caused a 3,000 gallon per minute leak. The asphalt heaved and the water eroded the granite soils and as it found it's exit to local drainageways. Payson PD quickly responded and established traffic control while Water Department Staff arrived and set up traffic control signage and isolated the leak. The Water Department Crew was successful in replacing the broken section of watermain and restored service to customers at approximately 7:30 PM and had the site cleaned up for use by 9:00 PM. Final cleanup and street paving is planned to be completed by the end of next week. Thankfully, due to redundancy planning and construction that the Water Department completed in 2021, the Hospital never lost service during the leak.



STREET DEPARTMENT

The Opticom – Emergency Vehicle Preemption System (EVP) interrupts normal traffic signal timing to provide a green light to approaching emergency vehicles so that they can pass through intersections to get to emergencies safely and quickly. The original system owned by the Town of Payson was in dire need of some help. With nine traffic signals in town only 4 were fully functional with the (EVP) system and one traffic signal did not have a (EVP) installed. The Town of Payson Public Works Project Manager, The Arizona Department of Transportation Traffic Signal and Lighting Supervisor for the central Arizona Region, A representative from Advanced Traffic Products and Town of Payson Emergencies Services Representatives kicked off the system repair with a meeting on February 23rd, 2022. With a finish goal date of June 30TH 2022 work began. An evaluation of the entire system had to be conducted, a materials list was created and ordered, and an electrical contractor had to wire the signal that had no (EVP). The Arizona Department of Transportation Signal and Lighting Department installed all of the new electronics into the signal cabinets and on traffic signals that were needed to update the system. During this time one of the original (EVP) systems that was functional failed, so more parts were ordered and installed. The project was officially completed on July 6th, 2022, with all nine traffic signals providing safe passage for all Emergency Vehicles equipped with a (EVP) transmitter. This system is owned by the Town of Payson, but is operating on (ADOT) owned traffic signals and maintained by (ADOT) Traffic Signal Specialists.



IT DEPARTMENT

Are Radio Towers Prone to Lightning Strikes?

Radio towers are tall structures, which makes them prone to lightning strikes. In fact, the taller the tower, the more likely it is to get struck by lightning. To make matters worse, radio towers are more vulnerable to lightning strikes because of all the electronic equipment and nearby buildings.

When lightning struck a radio tower at the Town on July 17th it damaged equipment in some cases beyond repair at Police and Town Hall.

With the help of a local company, we were able to bring most of the equipment back up and running within the week. Calculating the costs associated with this lightning strike is still on-going.

An electrical engineer was able to determine that the radio towers are properly grounded, but the town has some work to do to protect equipment from a lightning strike. The Town will evaluate an Early Emission Streamer (ESE) device which can be placed in strategic points of buildings that house critical technology equipment. The roles of these devices are to attract the lightning strike so that it can scatter its energy into the ground, far from the personnel and equipment.



End of Report

Next Report: August 11, 2022

