



# On the Gulch

A Newsletter For and About City of Helena Employees

## Virtual Desktops and You! \*Art Pembroke

In early 2014 Virtual Desktop Technology will be rolled out for city and county employees.

*What, you may ask, are virtual desktops and how are they going to impact me?*

What is a virtual desktop? A master desktop image is created with all of the common programs and services our customers use, such as Groupwise, Internet Explorer, Microsoft Word, and Excel. This virtualized desktop is housed on a central computer that serves (or delivers) that desktop to users when they log into the system. Whether you are logging in from your office, another location or device you will always see the same desktop! You also will have the latest updates to the services; updating every desktop image is a simple, single update to all virtualized desktop images.

First, let me assure you that if you are one of the folks who migrate to a Virtual Desktop you will still be able to do all of your work with the same software you use today. It should be a fairly vanilla change from the customer standpoint. You may see a few differences (upgrades to Windows 7, Office 2010) but they will not change the way you do your work. GIS and Autocad software users will not be moved to virtual machines at this time.

If you are on the PC replacement cycle this year and are a candidate, instead of getting a new machine, you will be getting a virtual machine. You will still have the same computer and monitor you have today. The existing system and data stored on your current PCs hard drive will be cleaned and we will re-image your machine with the virtual desktop client software. The next

time you turn your PC on, you will see the Virtual Desktop client and you will be virtualized!

Some of the benefits of Virtual Desktops are:

- ⇒ All software on the virtual desktops is the same!
- ⇒ If we upgrade or update a product it is updated once for everyone. No more worrying about whether or not you have the latest Adobe or JAVA code.
- ⇒ If you log onto your account from another machine or device, you will see your desktop.

The technology will allow us to create virtual desktop groups that have unique or specialized applications (all Fullcourt users or all Cityworks users). Once we create the base desktop profile everyone is on the same version.

For those employees that work from home or remote locations, you will login over the Internet from your laptop or home computer and you will see your desktop as if you were sitting in the office. You can even use tablets (iPads, etc.). All the while still maintaining all of the system security we have today.

Keep in mind that when you are working on a virtual desktop, you will no longer have a local disk (hard drive) to use on your PC. Storage available to the virtual desktops will be your network drives. This technology will be rolled out over the next four years using the current PC replacement schedule. Questions or comments? Contact Art Pembroke (x8340), or keep an eye out for email and newsletter updates.

## Employee News

*Congratulations to:*

Officers Brian Struble, Bryan Beniger, and Russell Broadhurst on their confirmation to our Helena Police Department!

*Welcome to:*

Police officer Marcus Strange; and

Richard "Skip" Gee, Community Development/ Building Division.

When you see our newly confirmed officers and new employees, please congratulate and welcome them!



## City & County Employees Make a Major Impact

With your dedication and generosity, this season the city and county collected 14,248 food items (that's 4,028 lbs!) and delivered them to Helena FoodShare!

Congratulations to  
*Commissioner Dan Ellison*  
and  
*Mayor Jim Smith*  
on their re-elections!  
Welcome to Commissioner  
*Andres Haladay!*



## Tech Tip #10: Unwanted Email Reduction \*Ellen Bell

How do I stop unwanted e-mails from coming to me? That depends...

If I get an e-mail that includes an unsubscribe option – usually at the bottom of the e-mail – I click it. Sometimes it takes me to a webpage that acknowledges the unsubscribe request and promises to do so.

Sometimes the webpage asks what types of e-mails I want to stop receiving. I usually check all options. Sometimes it will ask for a reason and sometimes I will give it one.

If there is no unsubscribe option in the e-mail, I tell Maia Spam Filter that it is spam. If Maia continues to send me e-mail from that source, I can blacklist it in Maia.

By using this process, I have successfully reduced the number of unwanted e-mails that I am receiving every day.

For assistance training your inbox, contact the Helpdesk (x8300 or [helpdesk@lccountymt.gov](mailto:helpdesk@lccountymt.gov)).



## Budget Season Already? FY 2015 is Around the Corner

It seems like yesterday our fiscal year 2014 budget was approved by the city commission. And yet, here we are, talking about the fiscal year **2015** budget. Similar to your household budget when you prioritize your spending, the city begins by looking at our primary responsibilities to our residents. Our policy is to provide high quality, sustainable essential services. Those services are: clean water, public safety (fire & police), waste disposal and recycling, storm water, parks & recreation, park & boulevard trees, open space, forest health & wildfire readiness, streets, alleys, non-motorized infrastructure, and land use planning and review.

Thanks to our great administrative services staff, we have help in navigating this often complex process. In the month of January, your supervisor and the director of your department will review anticipated needs and request preliminary budget levels. They will have the opportunity to meet with administrative services staff to go over the requests. They'll start with what it costs to continue to provide the current level of service, i.e. employee salaries, benefits, and taxes, maintenance of equipment, internal charges for

accounting and personnel services, and required purchases. Your supervisor's requests for additional budget items will depend on how much income they expect to receive from service fees and property taxes from residents. In early spring, the departments will each meet with the city manager to discuss those budget items. The city manager will put together his recommendations and will begin providing reports and recommendations to the city commissioners in scheduled work sessions in April. Those meetings will give your supervisor an opportunity to explain directly to the commissioners the requests he/she made.

At the conclusion of the budget work sessions, the Commission will establish their priorities and department operating levels. A final budget will be put together by the Administrative Services staff and presented to the Commission in mid-June for adoption. Administrative Services will enter the adopted budget into the accounting system where system safeguards will prevent departments from overspending their established legal budget authority. However, the adopted budget is not always the end of the story for departments. The budget process

remains flexible for times that unexpected expenses arise or original estimates fall short. In those times, departments may request an increase to an existing budget by submitting a budget amendment request to Administrative Services. The request is thoroughly reviewed to ensure adequate resources are available, it is technically correct and justification for the request is complete. The request is then sent to the City Manager for his review and approval, and returned to Administrative Services for entry.

Administrative Services is available to city staff throughout the year to answer questions or provide assistance on budgetary or accounting matters or any other related subjects. Remember, the city's budget matters to all of us in maintaining and improving our community, our neighborhoods, and our quality of life. The FY 2014 budget is posted on the City Manager's page (<http://www.helenamt.gov/city-manager/fy-2014-city-budget.html>). If you have questions, contact Tim Magee (x8412) or Bob Ricker (x8407) in administrative services.

**Thank you for your commitment to our community!**