

PRAIRIE PULSE

October 2021



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Steve Dye Begins City Manager Role

Steve Dye officially began his tenure as City Manager on October 1 after Tom Hart's retirement on Sept. 30. Tom Hart attended his last City Council meeting as City Manager on Sept. 21.

Annual Benefits Enrollment

Mark your calendar!

Annual benefits enrollment for employees

Oct. 18-31, 2021

Watch emails and the Raving Fans site for more information.

New Development Update

Lucky's Hot Chicken plans to open a restaurant near Epic East. **Longhorn Steakhouse** is open and **Twin Peaks** will open in Epic West in late 2021. **Tiff's Treats** will open a store in Epic West in early 2022. **Sprouts** will open at Carrier Parkway and Pioneer Parkway in early 2022. **Braum's** plans to open a new 6,000-square-foot store on the north side of Camp

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Fun Fitness Opportunities

Pumpkin Run

Saturday, Oct. 9

Registration: 6:30 a.m.

1 mile: 8 a.m.

10K Run/Walk: 8:30 a.m.

Lynn Creek Park

5610 Lake Ridge Parkway

Register:

<http://pumpkinrun.us/>

Pink Out Strollin' with the Mayor

Join Mayor Jensen for a walk through downtown Grand Prairie. All attendees are encouraged to wear pink to show support for breast cancer awareness.

Saturday, Oct. 23

9 a.m.

Farmers Market

120 W. Main St.

Sneak-A-Peek 5K Run/Walk/Stroll

Saturday, Nov. 20-Sunday, Nov. 21

Lynn Creek Park

5610 Lake Ridge Parkway

Be the first to see all new displays at the 2021 Prairie Lights. Nov. 20 is dedicated for runners, joggers and fast walkers. Nov. 21 is for those who want to walk or stroll through the lights.

prairielights.org

Cyclin' with the Mayor

Join Mayor Jensen for a ride through Prairie Lights.

Monday, Nov. 22, 6 p.m.

Lynn Creek Park

5610 Lake Ridge Parkway

Meet New City CFO Caryn Riggs

Caryn Riggs came on board as the city's Chief Financial Officer in August 2021

after serving as Director of Finance for the Town of Flower Mound for four years. She also worked for the City of Corinth as Comptroller and Assistant Finance Director for eight years and as an accountant at Sally Beauty Supply. Riggs says she developed her knowledge of city operations while working for the City of Denton Planning Department as a permit technician, and later as a tax analyst, while attending college. She has served on several non-profit boards and says that taking care of city finances is similar to that of non-profits because of smaller resources and restrictions.



"I came to Grand Prairie because I had heard of the wonderful culture here," Riggs said. "Right now I am observing all of the moving parts of the city, and each day I learn something new about operations here. This is such a neat time to be a part of the City of Grand Prairie and everyone has been so kind and welcoming."

Riggs played competitive softball growing up as a catcher and pitcher. She has a 22-year-old son who just graduated from Oklahoma State University and is leaving for Marine boot camp soon. Her daughter is a sophomore at the University of Alabama studying to be a surgeon. Riggs has been married for 23 years and has a dog named Gumbo.

She and her family enjoy volunteering in the community and they all are very sports-oriented.

"I like to find the joy in every day," Riggs said.

City Hall Construction Update

The large parking lot on the south side of City Hall Central is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2021. The new parking lot will add 23 spots to the former lot and will include greenery and landscaping. City Hall West exterior construction to incorporate City Hall West with City Hall Central and City Hall East is scheduled to be complete by the end of 2021.

*Please note that the old City Hall front entrance near City Council Chambers is now closed and may only be used as a fire escape. **An alarm will sound if the doors are opened from the interior of City Hall West.***

New Email Security Feature: Phish Alert Button



IT works hard to prevent many phishing emails from making it to your mailbox, but these threats constantly evolve, and eventually, some make it through. If you spot a suspicious email, click on the Phish Alert Button. This button will automatically forward the phishing emails to the IT Security Team for investigation. This phishing mailbox is constantly monitored, and an IT Security Team member will provide feedback on any suspicious emails ASAP.

Notifying IT of any phishing emails that make it through the email filters helps IT take timely action to keep everyone safe from threats like malware, credential theft, and financial theft.

This Phish Alert Button is only compatible with the desktop/laptop version of Outlook. It will not appear on mobile devices or Office 365, but any suspicious emails can always be forwarded (links, attachments, and all) to phishing@gptx.org.

City FAB Building Opens to Dallas County Voters

The city's Fiscal Administration Building (FAB), 326 W. Main St. (just east of Sonic) will be open to Dallas County voters for early voting and on Election Day. All registered voters in Dallas County can vote early at the FAB.

Early Voting:

Oct. 18-23, 2021 – 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Oct. 24 – 1-6 p.m.

Oct. 25-27 – 8 a.m.-5 p.m.

Oct. 28-29 – 7 a.m.-7 p.m.

Election Day: Tuesday, Nov. 2 - 7 a.m.-7 p.m.

For more information on elections call the City Secretary's Office at 972-237-8035.



New Development

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Wisdom, east of Magna Carta. **Dutch Bros. Coffee Shop** will open on southbound SH 161 just south of Warrior Trail. **Bahama Bucks** will open a store on the southeast corner of Forum Dr. and SH 161 with menu items such as shaved ice snow cones, fruit smoothies, acai bowls and iced coffees. **Hibbet Sporting Goods** has opened a store in Epic West.

The Epic Central development is on track to become a destination hub for entertainment, the arts, recreation and food. **Chicken N' Pickle** restaurant and entertainment venue will open in December 2021. Epic Central's waterfront restaurants, **Vidorra**, **Stirr**, **Serious Eats** and **Loop 9 Barbecue** are scheduled to open in late summer 2022. Construction will begin soon on **Bolder Indoor Adventure Park**, a 66,000-square-foot indoor family entertainment venue. Epic Central is part of the \$75 million Economic Development Bond Proposal approved by voters in May 2021.

Message from the Manager

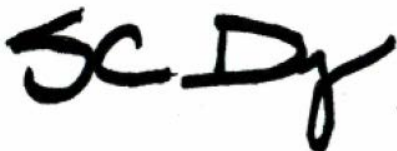
As I begin my service to you, as your new city manager, I first want to wish Tom Hart the very best in his retirement. Tom has been a great mentor to me, and many others, and has left a lasting legacy from his many accomplishments over his 22-year tenure in Grand Prairie. He was an exemplary city manager and leader.

As we move forward, I want us to continue to focus on the great things we are doing to serve our community and retain our healthy culture based on our established values of Service, People and Integrity. In our goal of service excellence, it is important that we always look for new ways to be more efficient and reduce bureaucracy through innovative and creative ways to improve processes toward more effective outcomes. I would like all of us to look at ourselves as proactive problem solvers who anticipate citizen needs while being highly responsive in addressing issues that arise. Our primary focus should always be maintaining and improving the excellent quality of life for everyone in Grand Prairie.

Every department in this city matters and collaborative teamwork and community partnerships should always be a mainstay of our culture. One of my primary responsibilities is to facilitate a positive work environment to help our team have the needed resources to accomplish our mission. Every employee in this city matters, and I want you to know that. I will be visiting with each department in the coming months to meet you, share my vision and goals, and listen to your needs and concerns. Great organizations are always searching for ways in which to further improve and better lead.

I truly believe that our city employees are the biggest asset of our organization. So, I am pleased to let you know that the 2021-2022 budget includes a 3 percent merit for eligible employees, effective October 9, which will be reflected on your October 29 paycheck (employees hired, or those who promoted from seasonal into part time or full time positions, on or after April 10, 2021 are ineligible for the merit and other exceptions/limitations may apply). This was made possible by the strong support of our elected officials. We are truly blessed to work with these dedicated professionals who work so hard for our community and continuously praise, appreciate, and respect the efforts of city staff.

Thank you for all that you do to make Grand Prairie a great place to be!



Steve Dye, City Manager

Events

Farmers Market

Saturdays, 8 a.m.-1 p.m.
Market Square, 120 W. Main St.
Open Saturdays through mid-December featuring locally grown fruits and vegetables, baked goods, tamales, salsas, dips, relishes, eggs, honey and more.

Call 972-237-4599 or visit gptx.org/farmersmarket

Forest of Fear

Oct. 15-16 and Oct. 22-23
7-9:30 p.m.

One of the best displays of Halloween spirit in Texas, Loyd Park's Forest of Fear witnesses the transformation of a campground into a drive through of creative Halloween displays. Drive through in your own vehicle - \$15 per vehicle. Concessions will be available for purchase.

For more information, visit LoydPark.com

Quarter Horse Racing

Races are on Fridays and Saturdays until Dec. 18

Gates open at 5 p.m.

Races begin at 6:05 p.m.

For more information:

<https://www.lonestarpark.com/>

Dia de los Muertos

Saturday, Oct. 30, 6-10 p.m.

City Hall, 300 W. Main St.

Monarch butterfly release at 6:30 p.m.

Food trucks, crafts and vendors

[More Information](#)