



CITY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2024

Administrative Services Department

prepared by: Laura Blair Johnson, Administrative Services Director

Purpose of Report

Outline the objectives and provide highlights of projects and activities in 2024. The Administrative Services Department includes the following services.

- Information Technology
- Human Resources
- Administrative Support
- Communications
- Government Access programming

Administrative Services has ten full-time employees and four part-time Audio/Visual Technicians. We support services for 200 employees, 60 seasonal employees, the City Council, 120 plus Board & Commission members, and Red Wing citizens.

- Laura Blair Johnson, Administrative Services Director
- Jeff Krueger, Information Technology Manager
- Alec Whipple, IT Systems Administrator
- Alex Saxe, Human Resources Manager (hired 2/2024)
- Patti Schmidt, Benefits Administrator
- Jackie Carlstrom, Human Resource Specialist
- Cara Kvanbek, Human Resource Assistant
- Melissa Hill, Administrative Support Manager
- Courteney Jacob, Communications Coordinator
- Emily Mallon, Office Clerk Receptionist II
- Patrick Harris, AV Technician
- Emily Schultz, AV Technician
- David Yanish, AV Technician
- Elsa Cory, AV Technician

Laura Blair, the Administrative Services Director leads the department to develop policies and training for City services and all critical network services. This position is responsible to implement City Council directives related to human resources, information technology, and communication policies and practices for the City. This position also acts on behalf of the City Council Administrator in their absence.

In 2024 we implemented a new Pay and Compensation plan. To date, we are still in the implementation phase as the IAFF Fire Union have not yet voted to approve the plan. We also began Union Negotiations with all eight of our bargaining units. The other major project was hiring an executive search firm to recruit and hire a new City Council Administrator.

Administrative Services Department Primary Objectives

Directs the City's administrative services operations, including planning and developing fiscally sound human resources, information technology, and communication policies and practices. Provides direction, leadership, technical expertise, and team coordination to support the implementation of the strategic initiatives.

- Provides technical and administrative support for a voice and data information system. Identify, recommend, develop, implement, and support cost-effective technology solutions for all aspects of the organization.
- Provides oversight of employee relations, compensation, benefits, performance management, worker's compensation, recruiting and hiring, training, labor relations, HR legal compliance, and HR record keeping.
- Provides oversight of all board and commissions related work, Channel 6/website, communications, public meeting spaces, and front desk supervision.

Jeff and Alec support 200 employees' computers, telephones, smart devices in many locations around the City. Some of the highlights of their year include:

- Replaced 12 network switches as part of complete network overhaul.
- Fully replaced end of life citywide Wi-Fi system. The new system also allows better management and improved security.
- Implemented MaaS device management system for mobile devices.
- Fully implemented DUO 2FA for all remote access to increase network security.
- Facilitated Laserfiche/CivicPlus integration for Boards & Commissions.
- Fully decommissioned unsupported Tegile SANs and moved to Dell Unity.
- Developed ID Badge policy for improved building access management.
- Implemented Dell Unity SANS and migrated VMs to replace Tegile SANS that lost support.
- Implemented 2nd physical LAN connection to LEC to allow Axon camera to be separated from the PD data LAN per BCA requirements.
- Built kiosk PC and adjustable desk for chambers lobby to allow citizens to access agendas, etc. online.
- Coordinated version upgrade of vIDix Labor to version 7. Evaluated and approved a move to Cloud in 2024.
- Rebuilt studio space to be also used as office space for AV techs.
- Developed ID Badge policy for improved building access management.
- Numerous changes to the control booth both to improve streaming stability and allow AV techs better monitoring. Completely isolated the CivicPlus encoder to eliminate any excess traffic.

Alex, Patti, Jackie, and Cara manage benefits, recruiting, and hiring for the City.

- In 2024, HR staff managed the movement, onboarding/offboarding of 143 employees. This includes 53 new hires, 37 resignations, 12 retirements, 10 transfers, and 49 seasonals and 4 interns. The new hires include a new Human Resources Manager, Finance & Accounting Manager and Engineering Director.
- We continue to utilize NeoGov for more HR functions including, performance management, onboarding/offboarding, and recruiting.
- An offboarding checklist was created for a more streamlined process when an employee leaves.
- We have added E-Reference checks into our NeoGov system while going through the hiring process.
- Earned Sick and Safe Leave has been implemented, but new changes took effect on January 1, 2025 (Those will be reflected in the Employee Handbook)
- Updated the City's Internal Badge Policy
- Updated the Employee Job Satisfaction Survey
- Created Guidelines for the City's Leave share Donation Program
- The City issued an RFP for Health and Ancillary benefits in 2024. We continued with Blue Cross/Blue Shield for the group health plans. Our Benefits Administrator, Patti assists employees through the open enrollment process and on their individual needs. Patti continues to troubleshoot ongoing issues with the online software databases that house all of our benefits information.
- Exempt employees are on Individual coverage Health Reimbursement Arrangements (ICHRA). We continue to assist employees understand this plan and educate our new hires and potential applicants.

Melissa, Courtney, and Emily support all departments with communications, board and commission support and training, meeting packet assistance, and website and social media updates. In addition:

- Melissa completed a three-year program and is now a Minnesota Certified Municipal Clerk. Her office was moved next to the City Clerk in February. She spent the majority of 2024 working daily with the City Clerk and learning the duties of that position.
- Working with IT, Melissa completed an integration between CivicClerk, the software used to create all board & commission packets, and Laserfiche, the City's official archive. The integration streamlined the packet creation process, saving staff time and reducing the chance for human error in our data retention.
- In addition to serving as staff liaison for the Arts & Culture Commission, Melissa filled in as an interim staff liaison for the Sustainability Commission for six months.
- Courtney overhauled the City's social media policy.
- Courtney began a City Q&A series for the Republican Eagle.
- Emily completed her six month probation.
- In addition to her routine duties, Emily began providing increased support to IT, including ordering employee phones and replacement phones as needed, and

setting up new iPads and Chromebooks for Council members. She took on extra support functions for the Administrative Business department, such as processing our department's Accounts Payables. She provided regular research and administrative support to the Council Administrator and Admin Services Director. Examples include: salaries, funding for homeless, support for local festivals, property ownership.

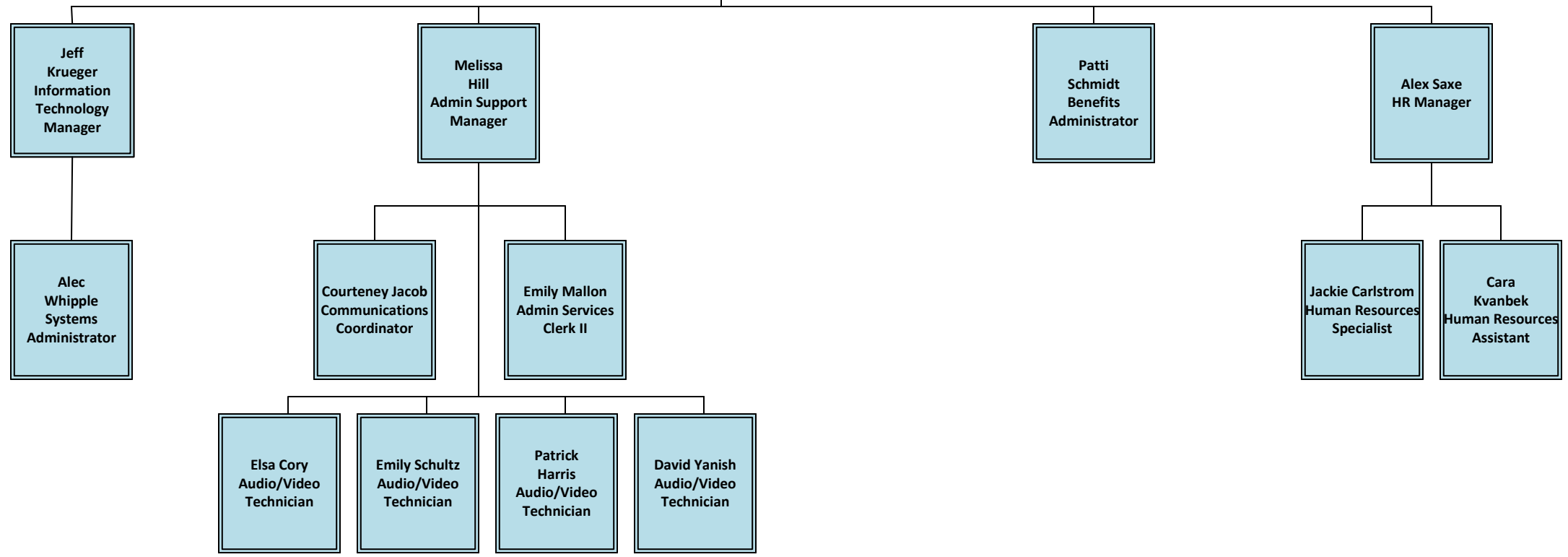
- Emily attended the League of MN Cities Clerk's training in the fall.
- The City was notified that new federal ADA requirements were released, demanding increased accessibility in government websites. The new requirements won't go into effect until 2027. To stay ahead of the curve, Melissa and Courteney completed a document accessibility course through MNIT (Minnesota Department of Information Technology) and attended several webinars on the new requirements.
- Four internal employee newsletters and one annual employee recognition booklet were created and distributed, celebrating co-worker milestones, and sharing organizational news.
- 23 issues of City Beat, our online public-facing newsletter were created.
- 69 original videos were created for Channel 6 and public consumption.
- 167 Council and Board and Commission meetings were broadcast and archived.
- 12 new board/commission members were onboarded.
- Two new board and commission liaison were onboarded and trained.



Kay Kuhlmann
City Council
Administrator

Administrative Services Department 2024

Laura Blair
Administrative
Services
Director



Audio/Video Technicians work
14 hours per week