



GENERAL INFORMATION

March 2023

Notable Items:

- Natural Gas Seminar:

Last week I attended a gas seminar hosted by the City of Mesa who is one of the five municipalizes in the state of Arizona who operates its own gas utility along with Benson, Colorado City, Safford and Willcox. The theme of the seminar was natural gas hedging, structuring contracts with gas providers and managing a natural gas portfolio.

Based on information, there are some solutions that staff is working towards that will benefit City gas users. First, is the need to stop purchasing on the open market and have a larger fixed cost as part of our gas portfolio. Second, is to find a partner willing to purchase gas for the City who has more customers and thereby stronger leverage with gas providers.

Unfortunately, some solutions were not feasible for the City of Willcox. Larger utilities have staff who buy and sell and monitor daily and monthly gas prices. If the City were to monitor its own gas portfolio and buy and sale gas, additional staff would need to be hired. Gas providers would also need to agree to allow the City to buy and sell excess gas. Willcox and Benson have been unable to find a company willing to allow the City to sell excess gas. The City of Mesa who has over 70,000 users is also having issues with companies wanting the City to sell excess gas. These companies prefer to sell the gas themselves and make revenue from the overpurchased of gas by their clients.

- Willcox Department of Public Safety DUI/Impaired Driving Enforcement Detail

The DUI/Impaired Driving Enforcement Detail for St. Patrick's Day began March 16th and ended March 18th. During the deployment officers conducted 90 traffic stops/citizen contacts. Officers cited two drivers with criminal charges for driving under the influence, two for Reckless Driving, two for Criminal Speed and one for driving while license was in revocation. Officers issued 19 civil citations for violations of Arizona Revised Statutes to include speeding, child restraint, and running stop signs.

The Willcox Department of Public Safety conducts DUI/Impaired Drivers Saturation Patrol as part of its agreement with the Governor's Office of Highway Safety who provides the City of Willcox \$56,000 in grant funding for DUI deployments, \$16,000 for aggressive driving deployments, and \$37,000 for new vehicle computers and new vehicles in 2019 and 2021. Grant funding pays for staffing, materials and supplies for performing DUI enforcement. The Willcox Department of Public Safety participates in thirteen state sanctioned DUI deployments every year in addition to deploying:

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- Every weekend in December
- At some Local Events and Local County/Neighboring City Events
- In School Zones at the Beginning and End of the School Year
- At the Mock Willcox Unified School District Prom Crash

The Governor's Office of Highway Safety is instrumental in providing the Willcox Department of Public Safety with crucial funds to continue to preserve and save lives and property.

Participation in these programs provides the Police Department funding for other needed equipment and programs. This year, staff has applied for over \$200,000 in grant funding to purchase new fire rescue equipment, vehicles, breath testers, children car seats, and to fund outreach programs helping to preserve City General Fund dollars to further other community programs.

- City Pool:

Based on qualifications, Cimmaron Pool was selected as the contractor for the City Pool. City staff are currently working with Cimmaron Pool on the scope of work and pricing of the pool and anticipates bringing the contract to the City Council for approval April 13.

- City Animal Response March:

During the month of March, the City of Willcox Animal Shelter impounded 39 animals. Animal impounds come from Animal Control Officers capturing stray animals as well as individuals dropping off animals to the shelter.

The Willcox Animal Shelter received 25 citizen calls during March.

1. Welfare Check
2. Stray Puppy - Impounded
3. Owner Turn In
4. Stray Dog(s) on Haskell – Gone on Arrival
5. 5 Stray Dogs – Returned to Owner
6. 2 Goats – Impounded and Adopted
7. Stray Dog – Gone on Arrival
8. Dog damaging fence
9. Skunk in trap
10. Removal of dead skunk
11. Dog harassing other dogs – Gone on Arrival
12. 2 Dogs abandoned at Circle K – Impounded
13. Dog chasing school children at Pearce/Phoenix – Citation issued and Returned to Owner
14. Dog tied to pole – Gone on Arrival
15. Stray Dogs reported – Gone on Arrival

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16. Stray Dog(s) on Maley/Railroad – Impounded
17. Stray Dog I10 – Gone on Arrival
18. Stray Dog Bisbee/Soto – Gone on Arrival
19. Deceased Cat
20. Injured Dog – Gone on Arrival
21. Stray Dog at Post Office – Impounded
22. Stray Dog on Ft. Grant – Impounded
23. Stray Dog at Community Center – Impounded
24. Dog Attack/Killed other Dog – 2 Impounded – Citations Pending
25. Stray Dogs near Flagstaff – Gone on Arrival

All residents should follow Arizona and Municipal Laws regarding dogs. Some of these include, but are not limited to:

- Dogs must be kept in an enclosed yard when on your property.
- Leaving a dog outside tied to a cable or rope is prohibited.
- Your dog cannot be off your property unless restrained by a leash.
- All dogs should be licensed.
- It is considered criminal littering if you do not retrieve your dog's waste.
- Barking dogs are prohibited and owners may face fines if not addressed.

If you experience any of these violations, please contact the Willcox Department of Public Safety to report. at (520) 384-4673

Common Questions:

Who in the City responds to stray animals?

During Animal Shelter operating hours, the City's Humane Officer will respond. After hours, Police will respond. However, if Police are occupied with other calls for service or duties that are higher priority, they will respond when time allows.

What does Gone on Arrival mean?

Gone on Arrival means that officers who respond to a call for a stray animal cannot locate the animal.

What do officers do if the animal is Gone on Arrival?

Officers will patrol the area and search for the animal. Sometimes, they will return to the same area at a different time to again check for the stray animal. Officers do not set traps unless a private property owner requests a trap be set. Often stray animals are let out of the house to go the restroom, or the gate is left open. Windy weather has also caused gates to be blow open or has caused damage to the fence allowing the animal to escape.

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How do I report a stray animal?

You can report a stray animal by calling the Police Department at (520) 384-4673. Approaching a stray animal can be dangerous and is not recommended. If the animal is wandering and you have a vehicle, you can follow the animal until an officer arrives to provide an exact location. Often stray animals return to their homes. If you have a phone, pictures of the animal are also helpful to law enforcement when locating and identifying an animal.

- Job Openings:

The City is hiring for two director positions. Additional information can be found at <https://willcox.az.gov/jobs>

- Public Works Director/Engineer
- Assistant City Manager/Community Development and Services Director

Upcoming Meetings and Agenda Items:

- April 13: City Council Meeting – Agenda items will include City Pool Contract Approval, Lift Station Pump Purchase,
- April 20: Regular City Council Meeting – Agenda items will include City Council Strategic Plan

Upcoming Events:

- Willcox West Fest Ranch Rodeo and Chuck Wagon Cook-Off – April 14-16
- Willcox Elks Lodge's Easter Picnic – Sunday, April 9th from 10 am – 2 pm

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Willcox City Manager, Caleb Blaschke

