

ANNOUNCER: You've tuned in to another edition of The Break Room. A

weekly conversation about how the City of St Augustine

works from those who do the work everyday. Hosted by the

City of St Augustine's Communications Director Melissa

Wissel. The Break Room offers a closer look at the different

city departments and provides updates on current and upcoming

projects and events. And now your host, Melissa Wissel.

MELISSA: Thanks for tuning in. I'm Melissa Wissel, Communications

Director for the City of St Augustine. This week, I have

invited Cindy Walker back to The Break Room. She is the City's

Communication Specialist. We

ran out of time last time

talking about all the ways the

City communicates. So I've

invited her back. Welcome back,

Cindy. CINDY: Happy to be here. MELISSA: So

that we don't run out of time.

I do want to just jump right

back in. We've we touched on

several things the last time,

but we didn't get deep into

News and Notes. And I think

you've got something new to

tell us about News and Notes.

CINDY: Absolutely. A new format is

rolling out. And I am very

excited to roll out this new

format because it is through

our website that we will now be

building our e - newsletter. So,

it is a more efficient, more
government developed product

that we will be using to create
our e- newsletter. So make sure

you subscribe if you haven't
already. You could hop on to

the city's website, How Do I?,
subscribe to News and Notes and

that will get you on there .And
it is a once a week e -

newsletter, it is not going to
spam your inbox. We won't be

driving you crazy, I promise.

Once a week and that's it. MELISSA: And

the old format, which we won't
say who we used to use, just

kind of got a little clunky.

And I think the other thing

that's really cool about it is,
we can, I don't want to say

track, track's a bad word. We
can see who our subscribers

are, and it's a much more
centralized tool, like you

said, because it's through our
website, so it's gonna look a lot

like our website. CINDY: Yes.
Yes, it's all about

that branding. MELISSA: And you
put together the newsletter

every week, and you you call all
of our information. What's

your favorite part about it? CINDY:
Face of the City. Absolutely

the Face of the City. I love
getting to interview City staff

and learn more about what they
do, how they do it, and why

they do it. MELISSA: Right. CINDY: And it is just so cool. If you haven't

read any of the features or seen it... Make sure you subscribe to

News and Notes. Check it out.
And it's given me a better

understanding of how our City operates and why it operates

the way it does. MELISSA: It's also really cool because you really

do, to the name of the campaign,
Face of the City and we've got

another campaign we're going to talk about here in a minute. But

Face of the City, I love reading about what the folks do

outside of work, because it really does, kind of share with

you, you know, what people do

when they're not at the City.

And I think you found out some
pretty cool things about people.

CINDY: Oh I sure did. And I'm surprised
every week, you know, you don't

know people until you talk to
them. And when I talk to them,

the things I learn is just
tremendous. I mean... MELISSA: We've got a

double black belt. CINDY: Yes. MELISSA: And I'm
putting you on the spot, can you

think of, I'm putting you on the
spot, but can you think of, you

don't have to name names.

But can you think of any couple

of things about a person or
someone that you just would

have thought... I never knew that?! CINDY:
Oh absolutely. So, a person I

interviewed is a philosopher.

And another one that I

interviewed is a medic that

goes on the helicopters. MELISSA: Oh

okay. CINDY: During emergencies. MELISSA: Okay.

Outside of their regular job.

CINDY: Yes. MELISSA: Oh that's really cool.

CINDY: Right? MELISSA: Okay. Well so in order

to find out all these other
cool things about who works for

the City and who makes things
happen. You do want to

subscribe to News and Notes.

That's what we were talking

about when we got off on this
little tangent. But also, our

social media, we talked a lot
about our social media in our

last interview, so we won't bore
you too much with that. But if

you do follow us on, do we put

that on all three? Facebook,

Instagram? CINDY: Facebook and

Instagram. MELISSA: Yup. And you'll

see those, those little

highlights of those Face of the

City campaigns. CINDY: Yes. We do

one a week and it goes out over

the weekend. MELISSA: Excellent. One

other thing too. I was going to

ask you, how do you, how do you

select, or do you select, do people

nominate? How do you determine

who's going to, if, of course

they have to say yes? CINDY: Yes.

Well, we accept nominations. So

far, other City staff has

nominated, you know, their

colleagues. But we did have a

resident nominate someone once.

And I want to challenge our
residents. If you see somebody

out and about who works for the
City and you want to see more

of them, see, learn more about
what they do, nominate them.

MELISSA: So, you could they could
probably do that on the

Facebook page. CINDY: Absolutely. MELISSA: Under this
week's, just go in and say, I

want to see... CINDY: Yeah. You could
comment on Facebook. Send us a

DM. You could send an e-mail to
info@CityStAug.com. I

will see all that and your
feed, your person just might be

featured. MELISSA: That's cool. I like
that idea. Alright. If you are

just now tuning in, you're
listening to The Break Room. I'm

Melissa Wissel, communications
director for the City of Saint

Augustine and we are following
up with Cindy Walker, our

Communication Special with all
things communication. We just

been talking a little bit about
campaigns. Let's circle back

again. We've got another
campaign topic that you wanted

to talk about and this is
something coming this fall. We

do it every year. CINDY:Yes, this
fall, October 17th through the

23rd is Florida City
Government Week. And that

is a week-long celebration
hosted by the Florida League of

Cities .And if you don't know

the Florida League of Cities,

it is an organization that just

encourages government to come

together and they provide a lot

of resources for us. Definitely

check them out online. But this

Florida City Government Week is

a celebration that encourages

Cities across the state to

celebrate, showcase, and engage

our residents in the work that

we do. So, we are going to do

that this year by producing a

day-in-the-life video series.

MELISSA: Awesome. And we've been doing

this, well since I started, I'm

I'm not sure what we were doing

before. But I know I picked up

the torch about five or six

years ago. Before COVID, we used
to, the commissioners would go

out to the elementary schools,
greet the kids as they're

coming in. Fire and Police
Department would would go. They

would participate in the Pledge
of Allegiance in the mornings.

But of course COVID kind of
changed the way we celebrate

City Government Week. And tell
me what we're going to do with

these videos. So these videos
will be published on our social

media, so make sure you follow
us. Facebook, Instagram, and it

will be all of our agencies.

So, @CityStAug @StAugPD @CityStAugFire
@CityStAugMarina and @CityStAugArchaeology. MELISSA: So,

we're going to have a busy

week. That's coming in October.

CINDY: October and I have to give a

shout out to our video

producer, Merin Dunn. She does

a fabulous job. Anything she

puts her hands on, it just

looks wonderful so. MELISSA: That's

magic. Yeah, she does a great

job. CINDY: Yes. MELISSA: So, look for that and

they're going to be a different

video. And I'm not sure I will I

will share ,remind the public. We

did used to have wastewater

treatment plant tours and

archaeology lab tours. I know

that that's something that has

been done in the past, so if

you're wondering if we're doing

that again, I can't guarantee
that yet. But we are trying to

change up the way that we do
City Government Week to make it

fun and interesting. CINDY: Absolutely
and also so it's more evergreen.

So if you see a video and you
say hey this is cool I want to

show my neighbors or somebody, you
can just share the video.

It's more longer
lasting, further reach, and

like I said, this year, we are
doing a day in the life of City

staff. So, you're
going to get a little sneak

peek of what certain staff
does, how they do their job,

and what's going on. MELISSA: Excellent.
Well, so we'll look forward to

that in October. Talking
about communications. Let's

talk about the website before
we have to go. CINDY: Absolutely. It

is a robust website. Anything
you need CityStAug

related, it's on there and then
some. MELISSA: And then some, right. So

that's where you're going to,
you mentioned before there's a,

you said how do I?. So when
Cindy said how do I, there's a

menu bar across the top, and
it's, I think it's community,

services, government, how do I,
and there's a drop down, how do

I, and that's where you would
subscribe to News and Notes.

It's also where you can go to
watch meetings. CINDY: And listen to

the recordings of The
Break Room. MELISSA: The Break Room. CINDY: It's all on

there. Anything you need. MELISSA: We
have a calendar that's going to

have our calendar events.

You're going to see things like

Concerts in the Plaza. One
of the things I like about it.

Tell me about the alert that we
have on the website. CINDY: Yes, so

there is an alert bar that will
scroll across the top of the

website. It's a big red bar.

You cannot miss it and we use

that in cases of emergencies.

Emergency notifications, I

should say. Not like hurricane
emergencies, but more like

urgent. MELISSA: Something to be aware of.

CINDY: Exactly. Like if we have to

cancel Concerts in the Plaza. That bar will be up

there. If there is a like... MELISSA: a

boiled water notice. CINDY: Boil water or

water pressure is going to be

low, water main break. It's

going to be up there. We

will also use that for events.

Fourth of July we use that

and it was very effective. Just

to let folks know that

fireworks are on time. But if

the fireworks were delayed or

cancelled, that's where that

notification would be.

MELISSA: Excellent. And we also do

post, that you were mentioning

Concerts in the Plaza. If

you're listening and you do

like to do the concerts, we do

also post that on our Facebook.

And I I will make one note

about Concerts in the Plaza,

just if you'll indulge me for a

second, because when we're

running Concerts in the Plaza,

of course, that's our free

summer concert series. We

always get these phone calls

about three, four o'clock in

the afternoon during all those

thunderstorms. Are the concerts

still on? Are the concerts

still on? Well, you all know, if

you've lived here for more than

five minutes, that four o'clock

thunderstorm does not mean it

will be raining at 7 o'clock.

So, if you want to see concerts

in the plaza and you're not

sure, you need to get downtown,

bring your chair, bring your

blanket, and if there's a

cancellation, it's probably

going to happen at the very

last minute. But again, if that

does happen at the very last

minute talking about our

communications tools, we're

going to put it on our social

media and on the City's alert

bar on the website. CINDY: Yes and if

there is not a notification,

then the concert is still on.

MELISSA: That's right. CINDY: Absolutely and

another thing I want to mention

on the website as you're

looking for information is the

search bar. And that has helped
me tremendously because our

website is so robust. It is
very simple to use and you can

just type in what you're
looking for and it's like a

little Google search engine
just for our website. MELISSA: Right and

is it hard to find? CINDY: It's right
there. You can't miss it. MELISSA: It's

right there in the front. One
other thing We have, anytime we

set put out a press release, we
do a homepage story. CINDY: Yes,

absolutely and it's called
yeah, the homepage story, full

story, alert, whatever. But it
is right there on the homepage.

You'll see the picture. You'll

see the title. Click on it and

then that will show you the
full story. So, if you're

scrolling on social media and
it says, check out the full

story. Make sure you click that
link. It'll take you back to

our website, where you can get
all the details, more

information. Social media, you
can only put so much

information. MELISSA: Right on the post.

CINDY: On the post itself, that we store

the majority of it on the
website. MELISSA: And we also have on

the homepage, we've got some
shortcut buttons during concert

season. There'll be a shortcut
for concerts during Nights of

Lights. There'll be a shortcut

for Nights of Lights. Nice,

big, bold box button there

right on the homepage. And we

also have the notify me feature

which is where you can

subscribe to our calendar. CINDY: And

News and Notes. MELISSA: And News and

Notes. CINDY: Yes, so make sure you

take advantage. If you have a

minute, go explore our website.

We have a lot of new,

interesting content. I must say

our resiliency portion of the

website has recently been

built, not too recent, but

recently been built. And the

content on there is fabulous.

MELISSA: And that's the, that's actually

you're right to bring that up.

That's that was a huge project
with Public Works. And and

the resilience team there with
Jessica Beach and and Caitlin

Sargent. They built that out.
Nice, big, like you said it's

it's really easy to navigate.
The buttons are there. If

you've got flooding issues, you
want to see what the projects

are that the city is working
on. You want resources for

flood mitigation. We've got the
flood mitigation grant program

that's going on. We do that
annually. All of that

information is on that
resilience page. CINDY: Yes, also fact

sheets for upcoming big

projects that we just got all

that grant money for. So, if
you want to learn more about

where that grant money is
going, what those projects are,

those fact sheets right there
on the resiliency portion of

the web site. MELISSA: Those fact sheets
are impressive. CINDY: They really

are. MELISSA: I mean, there's pictures,
there's data, there's

information, there's timelines.

If you're wondering about

anything that we're working on
in the city, you just need to

go to the website, type it into
the search bar. CINDY: And it'll be

there. Information at your
fingertips. MELISSA: Anything else we,

did we catch it all this time? CINDY:

Just about. Okay, any anything

else? CINDY: Anything else? Just make

sure you follow us on social

media. We are on Facebook,

Twitter, and Instagram and you

can the list of all of our

platforms on the city's website

under Communications. MELISSA: Thanks

for stopping by The Break Room.

CINDY: Thanks for having me. MELISSA: If you

missed part of this broadcast

and want to go back, you can

find all of our podcast

platforms at CityStAugRadio.com and like Cindy just

said, in order to stay

connected, you need to be

connected. So follow us on

social at Facebook, Twitter,

and Instagram @CityStAug. Thanks for tuning in.

Until next time. ANNOUNCER: You've been

listening to The Break Room. A weekly

program addressing projects and

programs offered by the City of

St. Augustine. Join us each

week as the City's

Communications director, Melissa

Wissel, has in-depth

conversations with the people

who make our town work to meet

the needs of our community. The

Break Room is produced by

Communication Specialist for

the City of St. Augustine,

Cindy Walker. See you at this

time next week for another

edition of The Break Room.