

The Break Room, Barb Moore, Deputy Director of General Services, June 23, 2025

Transcript

Narrator:

You've tuned in to another edition of The Break Room. A weekly conversation about how the City of Saint Augustine works from those who do the work every day hosted by the City of Saint 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 Wissel:

Welcome to The Break Room. Thanks for tuning in. I'm Melissa Wissel, communications director for the City of Saint Augustine. We've recently been talking about grant funding for projects around the city. Last week we spoke with Jacob Webber about the removal of derelict vessels in our local waterways, but we also have a waterproofing project right now going on at City Hall. A major undertaking, it's expensive and we are fortunate to have funding support for that project as well. So joining me in studio this week to talk about waterproofing City Hall is Barb Moore she is our director, deputy director of General Services. Barb welcome back.

Barb Moore:

Hey, thank you for having me. Good to see you good.

Melissa Wissel:

Let's get through that goodness. So you've been on here before talking about funding projects. The last one that we were talking about was at the visitor Information Center what's the latest.

Barb Moore:

Well we've actually completed the visitors Information Center floor we replaced all the flooring with hard pine, that project's complete. We uh we actually got a grant from the Department of State, division of historical resources for 5 projects.

Melissa Wissel:

oh.

Barb Moore:

3.6 million dollars and the VIC floor was one of them. The second one was painting the Pena Peck house and that projects complete.

Melissa Wissel:

OK

Barb Moore:

The 3rd was a new roof on the Pena Peck House. And if you walk down Saint George Street you'll see that that is going to be finished this week. Brand new copper roof, downspouts, gutters, beautiful.

Melissa Wissel:

Beautiful.

Barb Moore:

Yes they're finishing it on Friday.

Melissa Wissel:

So painting and a roof on Pena Peck House.

Barb Moore:

Yes, Painting and a Roof on the Pena Peck House. The 4th one is the waterproofing project.

Melissa Wissel:

OK

Barb Moore:

So as you can see it's been going on since December. There's a lot of scaffolding there's a lot of repairs that project is going to be done in about a month.

Melissa Wissel:

OK

Barb Moore:

The scaffolding is down, so there's no more scaffolding. Next you're going to see a bucket truck out front working on the towers.

Melissa Wissel:

Oh

Barb Moore:

So they have done all of the repair work. Repairing the cracks, repairing the broken terracotta and applying a waterproofing sealant.

Melissa Wissel:

And that was on the whole exterior? Outer, outer surface as well as that courtyard surface.

Barb Moore:

Correct, on the City Hall portion all the way to the back to the Lightner gift shop, interior courtyard, all 4 exterior elevations and you know, the hallways if you will.

Melissa Wissel:

OK

Barb Moore:

So actually the waterproofing material is the least expensive part. That part of the grant was 1.35 million. So it's been the repair work. It's not a restoration project, it's a repair. They're taking out cracks that were filled inappropriately, applying coquina and the appropriate material, filling in new cracks, but it's been the terracotta there are a lot of broken terracotta in the Spires. It's the red, it's the clay if you look at windows you'll see dental molding broken all of that's been repaired. So we will have to reapply waterproofing every 10 years. It's the repair and the crack repair that is taken so long.

Melissa Wissel:

On this project.

Barb Moore:

On this project. So like I said we're going to get through behind the Lightner gift shop. From there back it is not funded.

Melissa Wissel:

OK

Barb Moore:

Yeah so we'll be looking somewhere in the future maybe 27 to go back to the Department of State, see if there's any funding available to finish the project. And it will start over again on

the Lightner. Repair of the cracks, repair of the terracotta, waterproof the building. That will probably be another \$2,000,000.00. Necessary. So had we not done the waterproofing, over time the building absorbs water because it's concrete and coquina and it just absorbs and then you see spalling, which is when the concrete starts flaking off the off the building and you're left with shells. And erosion overtime it's it's necessary.

Melissa Wissel:

Right.

Barb Moore:

Finally, this waterproofing material has been approved by the National Park Service, it's it's gone through HARB it's a big deal and so.

Melissa Wissel:

Because you can't just go to Home Depot and get like a an industrial strength or a vat or something that is enough material, excuse me, to waterproof. It has to be approved, there's a historic preservation aspect to what we're doing so.

Barb Moore:

There is. It's very specific, it's a very specific product there's multiple waterproofing agents available. This one has the best perm rating, meaning that sucks into the building, it absorbs, but you can't see it on the surface. A concern of waterproofing in the past is that it changes the look of the building the building looks painted.

Melissa Wissel:

Really?

Barb Moore:

For example, when you're done some waterproofing materials change the look. That was not going to happen. So this material has been tested, tried and true, been around for years. We actually put a section on our building in 2014 and we're able to go back you couldn't tell where it is except for pictures that were taken. And it was still repelling water all the way from back in 2014. But it did go through HARB. It has been approved by the state and it's really the Park Service that gave it the green light if you will. So it will protect the building going forward which is what it needed. So that project's been going on for quite a while.

Melissa Wissel:

OK

Barb Moore:

Light at the end of the tunnel. A little more repair work to do and then the entire front will be water repellent and you can actually walk up to it if you want to take a bottle of water and it should roll right down the building.

Melissa Wissel:

Wonderful.

Barb Moore:

No absorption.

Melissa Wissel:

No absorption.

Barb Moore:

So what we're going to end up doing to that it worked is we're going to be doing what's called rylam testing all around the building of random places uses the test tube you put it right up

against the building you put water and you can see the absorption rate. Before we have videos.

Melissa Wissel:

Of it before OK.

Barb Moore:

Sucked right in the building like within 5 seconds.

Melissa Wissel:

Wow

Barb Moore:

This time It won't, it won't it won't drop at all so they're invisible.

Melissa Wissel:

So it's like that it's like when you those commercials with the decking waterproofing where they show the beating of the water on the on The deck.

Barb Moore:

Precisely and you can look at your windows right now since the courtyard has been done in the internal courtyard windows you can look after it rains and you'll see all the beading of the water on the window sills because it's already been applied.

Melissa Wissel:

Wonderful.

Barb Moore:

That's great, it's really great. That's the 4th project the 5th one is the replacement of the remaining windows.

Melissa Wissel:

Gotcha

Barb Moore:

So City Hall has already replaced about 250.

Melissa Wissel:

That's a crazy amount of number you don't think about it but you I guess if you really stood out there and you started counting windows it would add up.

Barb Moore:

There's over 600 between City Hall and the Lightner so we're in phase 5 we've already replaced over 250. We are replacing all of the rest of them City Hall and the Lightner. The Lightner has not had any windows replaced in I don't even know how many years and we are replacing all of them.

Melissa Wissel:

Wow OK.

Barb Moore:

So that project started this week and we have a contractor and then it's going to take 5 months. And it's installed from the inside for the most part. It's going to be going into everybody's offices. It's going to be the Lightner that will be tricky we're working with David Bagnall director of the Lightner Museum very carefully. Actually. Because most of the windows are in public spaces and they will be replaced with the Lightner museum open.

Melissa Wissel:

So 5 months we'll just put it up right up against Nights of Lights just like everything else.

Barb Moore:

Exactly our goal is to be done before then we now have 3 teams of installers. They're you know getting their groove on, figuring it out. Because it it's tedious work we're putting in windows in a concrete building with an opening that was chiseled at one point in time back in the day.

Melissa Wissel:

Back in the day. And then we do seriously need to light them, if they're part if they're part of the lighting of the building for Nights of Lights.

Barb Moore:

We do so we have the whole project plan done and the project is planned out floor by floor, window by window. Every single window in the entire building has a number and so you know we're working the plan but that's starting now. So as the waterproofing winds down the windows ramp up.

Melissa Wissel:

Windows ramp up. If you're just now tuning in you're listening to The Break Room. I'm Melissa Wissel, communications director for the City of Saint Augustine. We're talking with Barb Moore she is the deputy director of General Services for the city of St Augustine. Waterproofing, roofing, flooring, windows, painting all kinds of projects. And those are funded projects, you and I were speaking those are funded grant funded but we do a lot of work that is not necessarily grant funded that we take out of our budget.

Barb Moore:

We do.

Melissa Wissel:

And it's to public benefit tell us about some of those projects as well completed in any I'm not sure are there more upcoming I know we have completed projects.

Barb Moore:

We've completed projects. We always budget for something with you know continuing improvement projects in the future we'll be focusing on things like playgrounds. Replacing old, outdated equipment. You know city properties is what we're talking about city owned buildings whether it's a new roof on the fire department we've replaced the roof on PD but some of the public spaces are for example we've replaced or restored actually all the windows at the Pena Peck house which was a huge job. We've restored all of the windows at the visitor center that was completed last year. We've replaced the roof at the Florida Cracker Cafe and all of the woodwork and rails, that was just completed. We have actually our facility staff has rebuilt all the shutters at the Pena Peck house so next time you take a look walk down St George Street and you look up and you see how many shutters there are, they're all handcrafted. So our carpenters, master carpenters have hand built and restored every single one of them.

Melissa Wissel:

That's something to note.

Barb Moore:

It's huge well.

Melissa Wissel:

Maybe we'll snap a picture of that and share that on our social just as a shout out to the to the master carpenters that's huge.

Barb Moore:

They do a great job it's very hard.

Melissa Wissel:

And are sort of our our our gem in Lincolnville is the Galimore. Tell us about the Galimore I don't know I think it's a hidden gem too I think people don't realize what we have down there at the Galimore tell us about the Galimore and the work that was done down there.

Barb Moore:

It is. I mean the Galimore truly is an amazing venue. First it was the pool we completely redid the pool. Decking, all all of it and then we moved on to phase one and 2 of the renovation of the building and it's completely been redone, top to bottom, from flooring to the kitchen, the bathroom, sharp coated floors.

Melissa Wissel:

It's beautiful.

Barb Moore:

And we actually it it is gorgeous and we actually made better use of space. We took a big open room that wasn't really ever used divided it now have storage now have actually a little conference room. We built in desks, we built in computer accessibility with plugs and whatnot kitchen stunning.

Melissa Wissel:

So. Let me rewind that a second so a meeting room, so can anyone reserve that space to have a meeting?

Barb Moore:

They can.

Melissa Wissel:

Book Club, community Neighborhood Association, a board. Maybe I have a group that I'm I serve on a board with and we need a space to have a meeting.

Barb Moore:

Absolutely. So there's 2 rooms typically it's rented out fully the large room you know your dance classes at night or whatnot. But there is a small space OK with built in desks and whatnot so like we have the YMCA you know the swing ramp summer camps there right now and they use both spaces so it really is depending upon what you need the space for typically it's rented. Full use of the building.

Melissa Wissel:

And the big room you were just mentioning the dance classes, but church services, birthday parties, family reunions, you name it public meeting we've done some of our public meetings down there as well parking, great parking.

Barb Moore:

We have. Parking, parking is amazing plus overflow at Betty Vickers Park.

Melissa Wissel:

And can you tell me what it cost to rent it?

Barb Moore:

No, I'm I'm not really sure.

Melissa Wissel:

It's inexpensive under I'm going to say under \$500.00

Babr Moore:

Yes. Very inexpensive. And you have a deposit.

Melissa Wissel:

Sorry Corey Niles I don't remember, but inexpensive.

Barb Moore:

Yeah inexpensive it's very inexpensive, affordable and like the pool right now you can swim at the pool I believe adults are \$2.00 right children are in dollar it's an amazing space like you said parking. The key is to reserve it in advance in there I know there's reservations out for 2 years so let's get it while you can. It's a completely different facility.

Melissa Wissel:

The room is beautiful there's some soundproofing on it like you said the floors redone. No I I actually recently attended actually you were there right a wedding reception there beautiful facility really nice.

Barb Moore:

Beautiful everything 's been redone. The painting, the the lighting, the flooring, the walls, the the sound.

Melissa Wissel:

Landscaping.

Barb Moore:

The landscaping, we we built planters out by the pool we didn't our facilities department and our contractor did. We closed in the double doors that led to the pool we they did an amazing job.

Melissa Wissel:

Yeah beautiful. OK last quick minute or 2 that we've got, what other projects anything else? You, you are constantly busy, I mean you do a lot of work for us internally we have inventory,

things that we get rid of, things that we bring in. Tell us a little bit about you know a day in the life.

Barb Moore:

My job basically is to support the division in General Services so we've got the Marina, the visitor center. We've got fleet, purchasing, property services, facilities being probably the largest, grants, so my job is to support them in however they need it whether it's inventory or vehicles or you know anything that they need. Aside from that, my role I handle things like elevator inspections, storage tank inspections, vehicle registrations, radio cell tower licensing, that type of thing the one offs that happen you know typically.

Melissa Wissel:

So you keep us running. You keep, you keep the city running so that the city can run everything else.

Barb Moore:

In those areas, Yes, I try.

Melissa Wissel:

Well you do a great job of it and congratulations because in the last 6 months I want to say you were promoted to deputy director.

Barb Moore:

Thank you, I appreciate that.

Melissa Wissel:

You were managing all of it. You were a I'm not sure what your title was but you were doing the work of a deputy and congratulations on being recognized for that.

Bab Moore:

Thank You, I appreciate you.

Melissa Wissel:

You are an amazing coworker for me but you're you know you do a lot for for our employees and and I can tell you from someone who works for the city when someone says call Barb you know it's going to get done.

Barb Moore:

Thank you, I appreciate you saying that. Yeah I have the best job ever yeah like the.

Melissa Wissel:

Best job behind my job.

Barb Moore:

Best Job well probably not.

Melissa Wissel:

My job is the best job but you Can have the best job in your department?

Barb Moore:

OK that's good that's fair.

Melissa Wissel:

And then you. And then you can let Cory get. Cory has to sign The all the all the paperwork and.

Barb Moore:

He signs everything.

Melissa Wissel:

Well thank you so much for coming down and telling us about all the great things that you have going on, you stay busy, you keep us on track. And we appreciate having you come down The Break Room.

Barb Moore:

Thanks for having me. Appreciate you.

Melissa Wissel:

If you missed part of this broadcast and want to go back in this in from the beginning you can find this and previous episodes take a look for that listing at citystaugradio.com. We want to keep you informed about what's happening in and around the city and that you hear it here, from the people who do the work to make it happen every day follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and X at citystaug until next time thanks for tuning in.

Narrator:

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. See you at this time next week for another edition of The Break Room.