



# PAUL CUNNINGHAM

WARD 2

April 6, 2018

**WARD 2 COUNCIL OFFICE  
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## PAUL'S NOTE

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

VITA Tax Help	3
Shred event	3
Coffee with a Cop	3
Parks Programs	4
What to Drop Off	5

.For the last four council meetings (plus two special meetings) the majority of our work on the council has been budget discussions. We have until May to complete this work in accordance with our charter.

One topic that has been high on our agenda has been the issue with retaining police officers. We have not been able to recruit officers fast enough to keep up with those that go to other agencies or find private sector work. The goal of retaining officers and providing our community with a high level of service is first and foremost on everybody's mind.

In addition to discussions at Mayor and Council, City Manager Michael Ortega has been meeting with the Tucson Police Officers Association and Chief Chris Magnus and his staff. On Wednesday, the manager announced to mayor and council that a framework has been agreed to and that details will be presented our next meeting.

Originally, we authorized a 2.5% salary increase plus additional money for retention funding. The new agreement would involve the same amount of dollars, but structured in a way endorsed by TPOA and Chief Magnus.

In order to fund the retention plan, we need to find the dollars. One of the City Manager's suggestions is consolidating city and county courts.

As you know, the city maintains its own court system in addition to the one operated by the county. As a city taxpayer, you are paying for both. The court itself (building, staff et cetera) costs \$9.5 million to run, which is offset by \$9.1 million in revenues from fines.

In addition, there are a number of functions we have to have to run our own court system that would no longer be

## PAUL'S NOTE (CONTINUED)

necessary. For example, the city would not need to run a public defender's office. The city would have a greatly reduced need for staff in the city prosecutor's office. Both of those functions put together cost \$7.5 million this fiscal year.

By the way, the County Administrator has said that these positions would be absorbed into the county.

Although the city hasn't run its own jail for decades, we contract with the county to board inmates. Without our own courts, we would not have to do this. We are spending \$6.3 million on jail board costs this fiscal year.

I'm also hoping that such a plan would make things less confusing for citizens with business before the courts and we can streamline some functions. In all, we are estimating, conservatively, that the city can save between \$7-10 million.

There are valid concerns that I've heard, particularly from those who have worked in the court system. As a former probation officer, one concern is what happens to the myriad of "specialty courts" that are unique to the city. These are for special populations and circumstances such as veterans court, homeless court and domestic violence court.

These specialty courts have earned the city recognition and grant funding and they need to be continued. Our City Manager has said that the County is interested in implementing them. I'll insist on language in whatever agreement we have with the county to continue them.

Another concern is that many misdemeanor cases which now go to a city court judge would now go before a justice of the peace, who is not necessarily an attorney. The fact is that this often happens now. Some cases, because of a legal conflict or otherwise, get transferred to county court. I don't think this will affect the level of service or professionalism of the courts.

I am, in general, supportive of this plan, but I want to make it clear that I will not support any agreement with the county that does not keep the specialty courts or takes away the ability of the council to appoint magistrates. I'll keep you up to date on what direction this plan is taking and would welcome your feedback.

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## VITA TAX HELP

We can no longer offer tax forms at the Ward 2 office, but we have been referring people to the United Way's VITA program. The VITA program's east side location is at Abounding Grace Lutheran Church, 2450 S Kolb Road. They are open for walk-ins Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays between 9 am and 1 pm until April 14.

For more information, including a list of necessary documents, visit [http://www.unitedwaytucson.org/vita\\_faq](http://www.unitedwaytucson.org/vita_faq)

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## PALO VERDE PARK SHRED EVENT

Norma Coffman (Fernandez Realty), Drew Dodds (US Lending Team) and Stewart Title are sponsoring a Shred-A-Thon at Palo Verde Park (355 S Mann Ave) on April 21, 9—11am. Beacon Secure's truck will be at the pool to safely dispose of your documents and paperwork.

In addition to paper, you will be able to safely dispose of electronic devices such as computer monitors, CPU/Tower units, laptops, stereos, et cetera.

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## COFFEE WITH A COP

The Tucson Police Department (TPD) will hold another Coffee with a Cop event next Tuesday night, April 10. The gathering will take place from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Panera Bread, 6129 E. Broadway Blvd. There is no planned agenda, other than a simple time to ask questions, voice concerns, and meet the police officers who serve the area. The national effort encourages police and community members to come together in an informal, neutral space to discuss community issues, build relationships, and drink coffee. For questions about the event, please contact the TPD Rincon Substation at (520) 791-5700.

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## CAROL WEST SENIOR CENTER

**AARP Tax Aid:** Mondays & Wednesdays, 9 am—12 pm (Main Building)

*The Carol West Senior Addition at Udall features multipurpose rooms, lounge area with TV, computer adult learning center and pool tables. It is located at Udall Park and is open from 9 am to 4 pm Monday thru Friday.*

## PARKS PROGRAMS

**Activity Guide:** Tucson Parks and Recreation's Activity Guide for spring 2018 has arrived, and copies are available for pick up at all Parks and Recreation facilities. It can be viewed online at: [www.tucsonaz.gov/parks](http://www.tucsonaz.gov/parks).

The Activity Guide contains complete information on leisure classes, KIDCO after-school, aquatics, sports programs, registration, and the Discount Program. Registration dates are as follows:

All leisure class listings are online at [www.EZEEreg.com](http://www.EZEEreg.com). Please see the Activity Guide for more information on registration and deadlines. Whether you enjoy being active in slow-pitch softball leagues, want to design amazing jewelry, or get healthy and fit, there truly is something for everyone at Tucson Parks and Recreation. For questions or more information on registration or programs, contact Registration Services at 791-4877.

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Tucsonaz.gov/  
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Remember to like  
Paul on Facebook!

Please bring these items to the Ward 2 Office  
for the following charities:

**THE COMMUNITY FOOD BANK—Non Perishable  
Items**

**DIAPER BANK OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA—  
Infant/Child/Adult Diapers**

**TIHAN - Personal Care Items for Individuals  
and Families in Need**

**LIONS CLUB—Eye Glasses**

**DANCING IN THE STREETS ARIZONA—Ballet/  
Dance Equipment**

**CASA MARIA—Plastic bags**

**SR. JOSE WOMEN'S SHELTER—Summer items  
and clothing, athletic shoes, back packs, tote**

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## MAYOR AND COUNCIL

The next Mayor and Council meeting will be on **Tuesday, April 17**. Regular Session starts at 5:30 pm following an afternoon study session. There is always a short call to the audience before the business portion of the meeting. Council chambers are located downtown at 255 W Alameda.

The agendas for the meetings are posted online at <http://cms3.tucsonaz.gov/clerks/mcdocs>

