



City of Takoma Park

City Manager Comments

Report of October 21, 2020

COVID-19 Related Information

Stay Safe! We are all counting on you!

This is a stressful time and the long months of isolation have been wearing. BUT, please don't let down your guard! Keep gatherings small and make sure all are wearing masks. We are getting close to Halloween, Election Day, and Thanksgiving. These are dates when people often gather. You want to be healthy going into these special days and you want to stay healthy after them. How do you do this? First, get tested. There are numerous Montgomery County sites that test easily and at no charge. One of them is on Wednesday from 11 am to 6 pm at the Greenwood Avenue parking lot behind Sligo Adventist Church (7700 Flower Avenue, at Carroll Avenue). Call 240-777-1755 for test results or testing questions. Second, wear your masks and keep in-person gatherings small. ***We can only stay safe if we keep working at it.***

No Trick or Treating – Have Safe Fun Instead!

Going door to door for trick or treating is strongly discouraged this year. Please don't go door to door, and please do not answer your door to trick or treaters. If you want to put treats out on a table along the sidewalk, make sure they are individually packaged and easy to grab. We want to keep everyone safe!

Takoma Park will have a BLAST this Halloween even without the trick or treating. Just check out our Rec Department's Halloween page: [TkPk Halloween!](#) Have you decorated your house or apartment yet? I can't wait to see the photos!

Other Information

Election Information

The City of Takoma Park has sent out ballots to registered voters and folks have been receiving them. There have been quite a few people dropping off their Takoma Park ballots in the Community Center drop box. There will be additional ballots sent out or available to those who registered late or did not receive a ballot. Remember, if you are a Takoma Park resident who will be 16 years old on or before November 3, 2020, you are eligible to vote, even if you are not a U.S. citizen. Questions? Email Elections@takomaparkmd.gov and our Elections staff will assist you. You may also call 301-891-7267 (English) or 301-891-7214 (Spanish). Staff is working hard!!

See the City's election [webpage](#) for detailed information on the Takoma Park election.

Regarding the County/Presidential ballots, while it is too late to have a ballot mailed to you, it is not too late to mail it in if you have one. If you have a ballot, rather than mailing it, you may wish to drop it off at one of the County drop boxes. The silver box at the Community Center is one of the official County/Presidential drop boxes. If you have requested a mail-in ballot, mailed in a ballot, or dropped a ballot into a County drop box, you can check to see the status of your ballot. Go to [Check Ballot Status](#) to see if a ballot has been sent to you or to see if the Board of Elections has received your completed ballot. It is only shown as received after the elections staff run the ballot through the bar code reader in their secure location, so it may be a few days after you've submitted your ballot.

Police Department Awards

Congratulations to the 2019 Officer of the Year, Civilian of the Year and Supervisor of the Year from the Takoma Park Police Department. We normally have an awards ceremony in May; we have to celebrate differently this year.

Henok Atakilt (Officer of the Year)



Pfc. Henok Atakilt was selected Officer of the Year 2019 because of his dedication to duty and his significant accomplishments and contributions throughout the year.

Pfc. Atakilt took the Oath of Office with the Takoma Park Police Department on January 9, 2017. He worked successfully in the patrol division until his transfer to the Criminal Investigations Division (CID) of the Takoma Park Police Department on July 6, 2020.

Pfc. Atakilt worked tirelessly in his assignment as a patrol officer, as well as assisting various other sections and for initiatives of the department. He was quick to volunteer for various assignments as the City faced a deluge of theft from autos, for investigations requiring additional manpower, as well as initiatives set forth by his own squad.

Pfc. Atakilt is quick with a smile and has an upbeat attitude with everyone he comes into contact with; he has been the subject of many compliments from residents for his assistance. Pfc. Atakilt is an excellent asset to the Takoma Park Police Department and to the residents he serves. He is recognized for his dedication and commitment as Officer of the Year 2019.

On a personal note, I want to say how wonderful it is to see Henok win this honor. He is a hometown hero. He grew up in Takoma Park, worked for the Recreation Dept, then has succeeded in his dream to be a Takoma Park Police Officer. Congratulations, Pfc. Atakilt!

Daniel Bushman (Civilian of the Year)

Mr. Bushman began his work initially as a dispatcher in March 2014. In October 2019, he decided to expand his career and began working as a Parking Enforcement Officer with our Neighborhood Services Team. Mr. Bushman has been an active member of the Peer Support Team for several years and has made himself available for many call-outs involving officers in crisis for Montgomery County as a whole. To be named Civilian Employee of the Year requires significant contribution to the department's visions and goals through outstanding performance showing initiative, perseverance and dedication to duty and the department in highly creditable work. Congratulations Mr. Bushman!



Det. Sgt. Joseph Butler (Supervisor of the Year)



Sgt. Butler has been with the Takoma Park Police Department for 22 years – the last 10 of those as a detective. Sgt. Butler oversees the Criminal Investigations Division (CID) and provides administrative oversight on a daily basis, while still managing to investigate cases, conduct follow-ups, interview victims, witness and suspects; in addition to being on call and routinely working on his days off. Sgt. Butler boosts staff morale with his sense of humor and easy-going manner. He makes himself available to assist officers and staff with guidance. In 2019, Sgt. Butler closed 67% of his cases. He works tirelessly when it comes to his cases. Sgt. Butler personifies leadership, encourages his subordinates to grow and demonstrates fairness, diligence and drive throughout the course of his professional performance.

Sgt. Butler is an excellent asset to the Takoma Park Police Department and to the residents he serves. His teamwork, persistence and efforts to take felons off the streets, and to ensure the safety of others, are outstanding. His ability to lead his subordinates in an effort to help them grow is outstanding and, in doing so, received this nomination from his peers. He is recognized for his dedication and commitment as Supervisor of the Year 2019. Congratulations, Sgt. Butler!