

City Clerk loves greeting locals, running busy office

By Jeanne Davant

You might say City Clerk Donna Kast is the face and voice of Manitou Springs.

Hers is the first face many people see when they enter City Hall to file an application, ask a question or visit someone on the city's staff. Sometimes people just drop in. And the phone rings constantly.

That's why Kast, who was hired just over a year ago, loves her job. "Makes it interesting," she says with a smile. "This is a lovely community and a great place to work. I've met many residents and business owners. It has been a very positive experience to work here, and I'm enjoying it very much."

Kast previously held positions ranging from utility billing clerk to director of finance and personnel for the city of Iowa Park, Texas, where she worked for 13 years. She moved to Colorado Springs in 2001. Before she was hired as Manitou city clerk on March 15, 2010, she worked at the Bank of Broadmoor as a commercial loan analyst and executive assistant to the chairman of the board.

That breadth of experience has served her well, because as Manitou's City Clerk, Kast's duties cover a wide range.

She works with applicants for liquor licenses and other types of permits; prepares the agenda for Council meeting and keeps the minutes; records all ordinances, motions and resolutions; maintains files of official documents and records; conducts city elections; and acts as custodian of the official City Seal. She also serves as human resources manager for all city departments.

Besides all that, Kast takes calls for Mayor Marc Snyder when he's not in his office, which is adjacent to hers.

And those are just her official duties. Kast has taken on a number of projects, the most extensive being a review of the City Code. She has found a number of areas in which the code is obsolete or unclear. She's brought several ordinances before Council to bring the code up to date.

Two of those ordinances helped to streamline the procedures for obtaining a liquor license and getting a permit for modifications to liquor-licensed premises.

"I've been making recommendations as I see them," Kast says. "One of the big focuses was on liquor licensing. I saw that as lacking, and I tried to simplify it. When I started, you'd grab one form out of this folder and another form out of that folder."

Kast put together a packet that includes all the forms and procedures an applicant needs when applying for a liquor license or seeking to remodel a business where liquor is served.

"We will be doing more of that," she says. In the works is a packet for art gallery owners who want to serve alcoholic beverages at events such as openings.

Another long-term project is organizing official records, which are spread throughout city buildings.

Kast has found that files for the city's 60-plus employees differ in the way they've been kept over the years as laws have changed. Bringing everything up to current standards is a big part of the job.

She's also taking action to reduce the city's insurance costs.

City Clerk public office hours

You'll find City Clerk Donna Kast's door open for public hours four days a week:

- 8 a.m. to noon Mondays
- 8 am. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays
- 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Thursdays
- 8 a.m. to noon Fridays