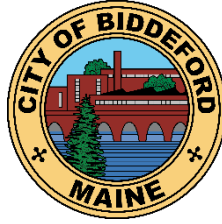

CITY OF BIDDEFORD, MAINE

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City of Biddeford Announces 2020 Employee of the Year Awards

BIDDEFORD — The City of Biddeford has recognized a set of exceptional employees who performed above and beyond expectations in 2020. The awards were presented at a virtual ceremony on Wednesday due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Deputy Fire Chief Kevin Duross was named the City of Biddeford’s 2020 Employee of the Year. Duross has served 16 years with the Biddeford Fire Department and was honored this year both for his role as the City’s point person for COVID-19-related needs as well as his ongoing dedication to his role at the Fire Department.

“When the COVID-19 pandemic first reached our community, Kevin stepped up and took on the extra work to help the employees of this City get critical information about the virus that helped us make decisions on how to proceed. As the liaison between the City and Maine EMS, he has played a key role in developing and implementing procedures to help keep City staff safe and healthy,” said City Manager James Bennett, who presented Duross with the honor at Wednesday’s ceremony.



Mayor Alan Casavant, Left, and City Manager James Bennett, right, present the Employee of the Year Award to Deputy Fire Chief Kevin Duross, center.

“Kevin is always willing to step up and help to get things done, and he always tried to do what is right for the employees of the Fire Department, the City, and the citizens of this City,” said Fire Chief Scott Gagne. “He is very knowledgeable in his job and makes good decisions on emergency scenes. He has always been the person that you can lean on when you need help.”

Several other awards were presented to employees at the ceremony, including the Management Team Award, the Technical Professional Award, and the Customer Service Award.

Roby Fecteau, the Director of Code Enforcement, received this year’s Management Team Member Award. Fecteau started his career with the City of Biddeford 19 years ago. In addition to leading the Code Enforcement Department, Fecteau also serves as the City’s Emergency Management Director.

“Roby was responsible for shifting the Code Enforcement Office to a remote inspection system at a time

when development in the city has not slowed,” Bennett said. “At the same time, he was also acting the City's liaison with the Maine CDC and York County Emergency Management for critical information about COVID-19.”

Jerry Gerlach, the City's IT Director, was presented the Technical Professional Award.

“When a decision was made with very little notice that City Hall was going to close to the public and the number of employees in the building at one time was to be limited, Jerry had to jump into action to set up employees to be able to work remotely,” said Chief Operating Officer Brian Phinney. “His knowledge of our systems and his assistance with technology was a key reason we were able to stay operational and responsive to citizen needs throughout the worst of the pandemic.”

The Customer Service Award was presented to Katie Duross, the City's General Assistance Caseworker. Duross ran the General Assistance Office by herself for three months in 2020, during which time she addressed issues that were unique to the pandemic, singlehandedly managed ongoing programs, worked on the 2020 Election, and spearheaded the City's historically largest Holiday Giving Tree program.

“Although Katie was dealing with her own stressors in her position, which were often big, she always managed to check in and ask if I needed anything. Her above and beyond work effort and attitude is one that we all should strive to have,” said City Clerk Carmen Morris.

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