

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE—MAY 15, 2019

Prepared for Mayor and Councilors. Please contact Steve Powers, City Manager, for additional information.

Jobs Well Done!

City employees will go above and beyond to be At Your Service. Two recent examples.

While at Wells Fargo Bank on Church Street, Gabe Benmoussa, Deputy Fire Chief, overheard an 86 year old lady asking the teller for help to find an affordable rental place where she can settle. She was very concerned about her safety and her belongings as she was staying at a motel in town, but would not be able to afford it for more than a few days. She asked the teller if she could hold her belongings for safe keeping. Gabe introduced himself and asked if he could offer some assistance. She explained that she can afford \$400 a month rental. Gabe coordinated with the bank teller for her to safeguard the lady's belongings. Gabe told the lady that he would contact her once he had some information for housing. Gabe contacted the Salem Housing Authority. Within two hours, Salem Housing had found affordable housing for her. Gabe, the Wells Fargo employees, and the Salem housing Authority employees went above and beyond to help a resident in need with quick action and compassion.

Christie Wolfe, code enforcement officer, has been working with a family of seven that has very limited means for quite some time now. Their property is covered in junk and household garbage. The adults have severe medical conditions. They are unable to afford garbage service and the trash is piling up in bags around the property. Garbage cans are too expensive. Christi began searching for other options for them. She searched online for cheaper cans at local stores and gave them print outs of prices and store ads. In the mean time she reached out to Tibby Larson with the City Parks Department asking her if they might have any old garbage cans they were disposing of that could be given away. Tibby did some checking and discovered several cans at Minto Brown were scheduled to be replaced. Christi and Officer Gorham delivered the cans and bags to the homeowner who was in tears with gratitude. While this doesn't solve all of their problems it was a small step in the right direction.

Federal

Staff have submitted a BUILD grant application to the United States Department of Transportation for McGilchrist Street. Salem has submitted federal grant applications for McGilchrist for a number of years and has yet to be successful. The project involves 10,000 linear feet of road and would add bike lanes, sidewalks, travel lanes, signalized intersections, and stormwater drainage.

Drinking Water

As part of our communication and outreach plan, we are encouraging residents to be better prepared at home. Sarah Batmale, Support Services and Emergency Preparedness Manager for Public Works, recently sent this out to Public Works employees. You might find it a helpful summary of where to go for information.

It's All About Knowledge:

Many of us become unofficial spokespersons to neighbors, family members, friends and acquaintances when it comes to City business, and we want to arm our staff with educated and positive responses to common questions. For more information on current preparedness efforts by the City, water quality statuses, and more...visit <https://www.cityofsalem.net/drinking-water>.

Who Can Count On You?

Are your kids, loved ones and pets two weeks ready? For more information on how you can be best prepared for a drinking water advisory or emergencies in general, please see the links below. Additionally, I encourage you to sign up for the Community Alert System for up to date emergency information.

- [Oregon Emergency Management's Two Weeks ready Resource](#)
- [Community Alert System](#)

Homelessness

Neighborhood Enhancement had received several citizen complaints regarding homeless people sleeping and living out of their cars and camping in the landscape strips on the 400 block of Division Street NE (downtown). Megan Gorham, Code Enforcement Officer, spent time in the area getting to know some of the homeless and providing them with resource guides and information to help them get back on their feet. As a result, the area is now clear of people living out of their cars, and she hopes to carry this over to other areas within the city.

Neighborhoods

The second neighborhood association workshop of 2019 is Thursday, May 23. On the agenda for the evening is a presentation on Salem's Building & Safety Division. Who gets permits? How do they get a permit? Does a permit last a long time? Neighborhood chairs and attendees will have a direct connection with Building and Safety Administrator, Rebai Tamerhoulet, and ask any questions they may have.

Projects

The City is currently advertising for contractor bids to remove the industrial structures in Pringle Creek between the railroad trestle and Commercial Street Bridge. The removal is funded by stormwater and urban renewal funds. The project will restore lower Pringle Creek to facilitate natural fish passage and restore riparian vegetation.

Concrete columns and slabs will be removed. The creek bed and bank will be regraded to more closely resemble a natural creek. Construction is expected to begin in July, dependent on receiving state permits, and be completed in December 2019. A public open house will be at the South Block Apartments Community Room, 315 Commercial Street SE on May 23 from 5 to 7 p.m. Parking is available in the South Block parking garage.

Housing

The Salem Housing Authority is continuing to work with the Family YMCA of Marion and Polk Counties and Senator Courtney's office on including housing in the Y's upcoming construction project. Housing for veterans is a state and federal priority; veteran's vouchers are a possibility for the Y.

City and Salem Housing Authority staff have been working with DAS on acquiring Yaquina Hall and the park property. The Oregon Department of Administrative Services' environmental review process for the North Campus required archeological and historic review. The consultation has resulted in information that the area to the north of the Yaquina property was once a cemetery. It has been requested that DAS perform ground penetrating radar testing to determine if there are any human remains in this area. DAS has retained a consultant and this work is expected to be completed by June 30. Given the historic and archaeological issues, the earliest the City can close on the Yaquina and park properties would be January 2020. We will have a much better understanding of the options, requirements, and timelines at the beginning of July after the ground penetrating radar work is completed.

Development

Current planning remains very busy. Pre-application meetings are fully booked, and in the last 30 days the City has issued almost 100 land use decisions and approved approximately 200 building/dwelling/sign permits. As of May 1st 36 dwelling permits are under review. The number should increase as we move into the busy summer season. We've also taken in more than 60 land use applications in the last 30 days.

Upcoming Issues

A resolution in support of establishing a Continuum of Care for the Mid-Willamette region that could include Marion, Polk, and Yamhill counties and that would be registered with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in 2020 will be on the June 10 City Council agenda. Keizer and Silverton have approved the resolution. On May 14, Salem-Keizer Schools and McMinnville are scheduled to consider. Yamhill County is May 21 and Independence is May 28. Dates for Polk County and Marion County are being confirmed.

Police Station

Staff and Day CPM are working with JE Dunn on the guaranteed maximum price for the police station. The team is working diligently on reductions that will not impact the integrity of the project. The council subcommittee will be meeting in June to review the status and next steps for the project.

Partnerships

I have provided a letter of support on behalf of the City for the Cherriots's application for a Transportation Growth Management (TGM) planning grant from ODOT/DLCD. The grant would support the development of a 20-year long-range plan for the District including the urban transit service in Salem and Keizer and the rural Cherriots Regional service. With the arrival of new funds from the Statewide Transportation Improvement Fund, Cherriots can expand services and needs to update current plans to reflect the new funding level.

Thanks for reading,
Steve