

## CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE—APRIL 5, 2019

Prepared for Mayor and Councilors

### ***Job Well Done!***

Salem's *At Your Service* depends on employees. We lost a good one last week. After 33 years of helping the public at Public Works, Patty DeHaan retired. Patty is a rock star. Her knowledge, judgement, and courtesy served countless co-workers, residents, and visitors to Public Works. She will be missed.

### ***Partnerships***

The City and Salem Keizer School District are working on a cooperative facility use agreement. A cooperative facility use agreement has been in place since 1975. In 2013, the City and District agreed that the City would no longer schedule the District's High School facilities for community use and City program use. In 2018, the School District and the City began scheduling their own facilities individually. The City no longer provides scheduling services for any District facilities. All District facilities are now scheduled through SKSD. The City is assisting the District with athletic space (fields) for the spring of 2019 to help alleviate scheduling difficulties for North Salem High School caused by the District's Bond Construction Program. Community groups such as club sports, little leagues, soccer leagues, basketball leagues, youth and adult sports, and individuals will have to contact the SKSD or City depending on the field or facility that they are requesting.

Only 40 participants are registered for this year's River to Ridge event. 2019 would have been the third year for the event. Travel Salem has canceled the event, a decision that City staff support. Travel Salem will attempt to bring on a new event promoter for River to Ridge in the future. Travel Salem will refund \$9,900 in City event funding and there will be no expectation of City funding for this event in the future.

### ***Fiscal Health***

Moody's Investors Service has reviewed the credit worthiness of the City's water and wastewater utility. Moody's review includes economic, demographic, and financial information. According to Moody's, the credit position for the utility is very strong. Our Aa2 rating is slightly above the U.S. water and wastewater systems median of Aa3. Key credit factors include a large system size with a moderate income service area, a negligible debt profile, very healthy financial liquidity and ample debt service coverage. The system size, measured as operating and maintenance expenses (\$65 million), is favorably greater than the US median. The median family income is 86.6 percent of the U.S. level. The debt to operating revenues is excellent and lower than the U.S. median, and it has fallen from 2014 to 2018. Both the days cash on hand (234 days) and the coverage of the annual debt service by net revenues (1.9x) are solid but below other Moody's-rated water and wastewater systems nationwide.

## **Housing**

Community Development Director Norman Wright met with the Salem Area Chamber of Commerce Public Policy Committee and discussed affordability in residential building. Norm shared information on City processes for land and building approvals. Mike Erdmann from Homebuilders Association also presented

The next public workshop on the design of multifamily housing is April 30. The public will have an opportunity to share opinions on the refined ideas for updating Salem's multifamily housing regulations. This is the second public workshop for the City's Multifamily Housing Design project. Staff received a lot of input on initial code concepts at the first public workshop. The project will provide recommendations later this year for the Planning Commission and City Council to update the City's regulations on housing developments with three or more dwelling units. The goal of the project is to help meet Salem's housing needs by removing barriers to multifamily housing development and ensuring new development is compatible with neighborhoods.

## **Council Follow-Up**

I attended the Polk County breakfast and updated the group on the City Council's direction on congestion relief.

Information on the plastic bag ordinance can be found [here](#)

- Beginning April 1, 2019, large retailers will no longer be distributing plastic carryout bags at checkout.
- All retail businesses, including grocery and convenience stores, apparel and department stores, and local markets will be impacted.
- Retailers can provide recyclable paper bags, charging a fee of not less than five cents per bag, or reusable bags for customers to carry away purchases.
- Restaurants and prepared food providers can still distribute plastic carryout bags.
- For stores that sell both retail items and prepared food, plastic carryout bags can only be given at checkout for prepared food items.

The City, through the Urban Renewal Agency, has closed on the Saffron properties. Saffron Supply Co intends to vacate by December 2019.

## **Public Safety**

Salem residents and business owners with security cameras can now register their exterior surveillance systems with the Salem Police Department's new Surveillance Camera Registration & Mapping (SCRAM) program. SCRAM is a way for security camera owners to share their video recordings with police if a crime occurs at or near their location, a very helpful resource for investigations. Interested owners can register [online](#). Using the participant's registration, locations are input into a mapping tool developed by the [City of Salem Information Technology Department](#). Should an incident happen in the area of a registered security camera, the owner

will be contacted by an officer to determine if their system captured any helpful video. Participation in the program is voluntary, and at no time does the police department have direct access to a participant's system.

## ***Projects***

Algae Season prep. Staff will be launching a comprehensive program for the 2019 algae season that includes testing, treatment, Oregon Health Authority health advisories, and communication. An information report is planned for the April 22 City Council meeting. Updated information will be on the City web site and shared through social media. Presentations are planned for the chamber of commerce public policy committee and Salem City Club.

## ***Upcoming Issues***

The City Manager's Proposed FY 2020 Budget will be available April 19.

On the April 22 agenda will be the 45-day action report on the Congestion Relief Task Force recommendations. The action plan requested by City Council will be on the April 22 meeting agenda. Letters have gone to ODOT, SKATS, and Cherriots with regard to the Congestion Relief Task Force recommendations. The recommendations involving Wallace Marine Park will be on the agenda for the SPRAB meeting on April 11. Given the number of recommendations and the complexities involved, the report will be an Information Report with a recommendation to have a work session on May 20 so council can have a more robust discussion than is possible during a council meeting.

## ***Federal***

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Portland District has published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement addressing the continued operations and maintenance of the Willamette Valley System. Separate from the cooling tower project, the operation and maintenance of the Detroit Reservoir dams have an impact on Salem's drinking water. Staff will be monitoring and participating in the public scoping process. The public scoping process is the mechanism to solicit federal, state, and public input on alternatives and issues of concern. Input received during the scoping process will help the Corps to identify people or organizations who are interested in the proposed action, identify the significant issues to be analyzed in the EIS, and gather input to be used in the development of action alternatives. Public meetings are planned for May and June 2019. Comments on the scope of the EIS will be accepted through June 28, 2019.

Thanks for reading,  
Steve