

CITY MANAGER'S UPDATE— April 8, 2020

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

At Your Service

Not often do the City's mail and document staff receive praise from the public. These are strange times, indeed.

This is a word of special praise for your Department's Document Services Section manned by Jeffery Springer and Matthew Grimes. For some years, as citizen-support partners of the City Parks Operations Unit, we Friends of Pioneer Cemetery have enjoyed excellent service provided by Document Services in producing an illustrated annual report to our constituents.

Within the short space of the last two weeks, in the midst of the ongoing public health emergency, I was able to consult with the team by telephone, submit the electronic file for our four-page report, receive and approve a proof print, receive a cleaned-up version of our mailing/address list, and express our preference for getting the piece in the mail stream with a March post mark if possible. All this Jeffery and Matt worked into a heavy schedule and achieved that aspirational goal of a March 30 post mark.

This kind of service requires a certain amount of nimbleness while observing safety protocols. It is much to the credit of your Department that you have adopted sensible security measures with regard to access to the shop in Building 14 and that your staff have kept their services running while at the same time observing restrictions on personal contact with clients that are required during the coronavirus crisis.

Please accept our ongoing appreciation of the Document Services team and our heartfelt wishes for the good health and safety of all your personnel through the weeks and months ahead.

Community

Some of the youth leaders that work with Laurie Shaw Casarez, the City's Youth Education and Outreach Coordinator, have been making video thank-you cards for the health care staff at Salem Hospital. They are very well received by their staff, and truly brighten their day.

Check this one out on [You Tube!](#)

Council Follow-Up

From the warming center funds approved by City Council in December, \$38,000 has been provided to Church at the Park for security services and sanitation supplies and \$22,000 has been provided to Safe Sleep for security services, laundry services, and staffing.

With the pandemic's impact on Church at the Park's vehicle camping, an additional \$21,000 was provided to expand the vehicle camping program, including meals for those who do not have access to a regular food source.

Planning and Development

Thanks to online services, COVID-19's impact on Building and Safety plan review and consultation is near zero. The plans are reviewed on line and on time. Inspections are performed daily with social distancing. Permit staff are working from home, with time spent in the office to handle only the tasks that require a physical presence.

Projects

The public art selection committee for the Library has selected Amanda Wojick as the artist to move forward with for the Library's commissioned piece. Amanda is a professor at the University of Oregon and has many public commissioned pieces on her resume. She titled her proposed piece as a "Dewey Decimal Waterfall" and described (sorry, no visual of the concept) it as:

"The proposed project will be a large wall relief comprised of tilted, painted and welded steel planes. The composition is inspired by the many beloved waterfalls in the state of Oregon, together with the symbols and shapes found within the Dewey Decimal system. The shapes will be arranged in layers, creating a three-dimensional relief that changes from different perspectives."

The City received a net \$58,874,022.61 from the utility bond sale. The funds will be used to improve our water and wastewater systems. The City's success in selling bonds was fortunate. Volatility is still the only constant in the municipal debt market.

We are continuing with projects and are receiving favorable bids. A wastewater pipe rehabilitation project came in 37.5 percent less than engineer's estimates and a multi-modal safety crossing came in 20.9 percent than engineer's estimates.

Upcoming Issues

The Salem Police Employees Union has approved a new contract. The contract will be on an upcoming council meeting agenda with an approval recommendation.

Thanks for reading,
Steve