

## City Manager's Update — September 18, 2020

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

### ***At Your Service***

Excellent work by all City employees involved with assisting Marion County with the Beechie Creek Fire. Gabe Benmoussa, Courtney Knox Busch, Greg Walsh, Emily Enders, Gretchen Bennett, Sarah Batmale, Jessica Blakely, Heather Dimke, Marilyn Daily, Nicole Miller, the fire team, and police officers.

### ***Climate Action***

Many of the invitees for the Climate Action Plan Task Force have been confirmed. An invitation from the mayor will be sent to those on this list:

- Energy-Electricity, Wendy Veliz, Portland General Electric
- Energy-Natural Gas, Connor Reitman, Northwest Natural Gas
- Emergency Preparedness, Greg Walsh, City of Salem Emergency Management
- Chamber of Commerce, Tom Hoffert, Salem Area Chamber of Commerce
- Business, Loren McLaughlin, Kettle Chips/Campbells
- Business, Nathan Good, Nathan Good Architects
- Residential/Development, Mike Erdmann, Homebuilders Association of Marion and Polk Counties
- Economic Development, Erik Andersson, SEDCOR
- Industrial, Mark Wood, Amazon
- K-12 Education, Vonnie Good, Salem Keizer School District
- Higher Education, Joe Bowersox, Willamette University
- Vocational Education, Rhonda Rhodes, Career and Tech Ed Center
- Students, Alex Burton, Latinos Unidos Siempre
- Natural Resources, Ken Bierly, Glenn Gibson Watershed Council
- Environmental and Biodiversity, John Savage, Native Plant Society of Oregon
- Green Spaces, Dylan McDowell, Salem Parks and Recreation Advisory Board
- Climate Impacts/GHG, Janet Lorenzen, 350 Salem OR
- Waste Management/Recycling, Alan Pennington, Marion County Environmental Services
- Food Supply, Rick Gauppo, Marion-Polk Food Share
- Transportation, Mike Jaffe, Salem-Keizer Area Transportation Study
- Infrastructure/Public Transit, Ian Davidson, Cherriots
- Stormwater Management and Water Supply, Robert Chandler, Salem Public Works
- Planning and Development/Land Use Planning, Casey Kopcho, Planning Commission
- Property Insurance, David Rheinholdt, Rheinholdt Insurance/Latino Business Alliance
- Public Health, Michael Keuler, Marion County Health and Human Services
- Hospital, Leilani Slama, Salem Health
- Persons with Disabilities, Ashley Erb, Shangri-La
- Low-Income Populations, Jimmy Jones, Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency
- Social Services, Tiffany Bulgin, Isaac's Room/Ike Box
- Seniors, Lesley Johnson, Center 50+

- Children and Families, Latinx Community, Levi Herrera-Lopez, Mano a Mano Family Center
- Indigenous Community, Briece Edwards, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde
- Social Justice, Benny Williams, NAACP Salem-Keizer Branch 1166
- Philanthropy, Chane Griggs, Oregon Community Foundation/Rotary Club of Salem
- Faith Community, Rob Thrasher, First Presbyterian Church

## **COVID**

In June the City awarded \$50,000 of our Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)-CARES Act funding to Travel Salem for tourism marketing. This was the result of a direct ask from Travel Salem to be considered for a CDBG award. The award was contingent on receiving a waiver from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Housing and Urban Development denied our request for a waiver. I made a follow-up request to reconsider the waiver and our Portland contact took it up the chain and confirmed that this use is not eligible. We were told that a waiver has never been provided for this type of activity and that they have a strong stance of not supporting this use.

## **Housing**

Salem Housing Authority received additional grant funding. Housing and Urban Development fully funded the costs to offset the rent increases at Orchard Park Apartments and additional funding for the costs associated with the portability vouchers. Total awarded: \$677,410. This is excellent news for the Section 8 program.

More good news, HUD will be awarding SHA the last grant application funding for the CARES Act Extraordinary Circumstances application. This was an incredibly fast turnaround for HUD, so we are attempting to confirm this information. The amount of the award is \$1,826,725 in additional housing voucher program funds.

## **Police**

For the police performance audit, an evaluation committee selected Hillard Heintze from among nine proposers. Their team is impressive, bringing depth in policing, community engagement and equity and inclusion to the table. The recommendation was unanimous, and all parties expressing confidence and enthusiasm in working with their team for this important work. Evaluation committee representatives have experience in accountability (from CPRB), performance auditing as a discipline, policing, outreach and engagement, committee facilitation, and policy analysis. An early October kick-off is planned.

Councilors have expressed an interest in body cameras for Salem police officers. Initial estimates are to provide a police officer and vehicle with cameras would have an initial cost of \$460,000 and a yearly maintenance and storage cost of \$245,000. In addition, the estimated cost for public record requests for the videos is \$200,000. The upcoming performance audit includes transparency and accountability. I have asked that the auditors review the cost/benefit of adding cameras to improve transparency and accountability compared to other methods and to other improvements that the audit may recommend, as requested by City Council.

The tentative schedule for the police chief interviews is to have first-round interviews the week of October 13. The first round will include a community panel and a law enforcement panel to help select finalists for consideration in round two. Mayor and councilor opportunity for involvement in the process will be during round two, several weeks later.

## **Projects**

The Salem Police Station is nearing substantial completion under budget. As of now, JE Dunn, the general contractor, is tracking to have greater than 90% of the building substantially complete by September 18, although the project has been delayed by the hazardous air quality and completion dates may change.

One item that is currently scheduled for completion on September 28 are the street improvements. PGE was scheduled to connect permanent power to the traffic signals prior to September 25 but we are unsure if they will be able to meet this given other demands on their resources from the fires. We intend to update the public soon on a timeline for reopening Division Street with a heads up to the Council subcommittee first.

The public art piece, *Equitas*, will include a plaque stating *Equitas* is Latin for justice, fairness, and equity. The piece represents the Salem community's aspirations through text collected during public outreach. The sculpture is an enduring reminder of the diversity that exists in Salem and the commitment of the police department to social justice, integrity, service, and compassion.

The public works building is getting started. The Council Oversight Subcommittee is the Mayor and Councilors Hoy and Andersen. Land use notifications have been initiated with the neighbors and neighborhood association.

## **Upcoming Issues**

John Horvick, DHM, is scheduled to present resident satisfaction survey findings at a high level on October 12 at City Council.

Thanks for reading,  
Steve