

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

Airport

I have signed the federal grant agreements authorized by City Council to rehabilitate and maintain several sections of taxiway asphalt surfaces. We will be removing and repaving a couple of larger pavement sections, crack sealing many others, and then removing some old asphalt that was abandoned decades ago. The City would normally have to provide a 10% local match for the \$2 million plus projects. Congress is providing the local match to assist airports during the pandemic.

Council Follow-up

The surplus former Fire Station #7 is slated to be rezoned to Mixed-Use III with Our Salem. Proceeding at this time with a re-zone to Commercial Retail will incur staff time, re-appraisal, and other fees that will erode much of the additional value realized from the zone change. Mixed-Use III is basically the same as Commercial Retail but allows housing as a permitted use and will have a few design standards for new development. I have directed staff to set a minimum bid amount at \$300,000 in recognition of the upcoming zone change through Our Salem and offering the property through an auction at this minimum price in lieu of changing the zoning and re-appraising the property.

Staff are developing a status report for later this year on the Human Rights Commission recommendations and the resolutions passed by City Council. The report will include actions underway and those actions that are planned to begin.

Community Development

The Permit Application Center has shifted gears from 100% remote to a mostly in-office, hybrid schedule. PAC is staffed daily by at least three employees to be able to continue to provide in-person customer service. We are continuing to monitor the volume of customer flow through the PAC; since re-opening on the 19th of July, it seems that most customers are continuing to utilize our online services. Building plans examiners performed their reviews within the turnaround time set by service goals. More than 226 reviews were completed for the month of July. Building inspectors performed 2,410 inspections.

COVID has continued to push us to consider technology and to make sure our online services are convenient. Building and Safety purchased two drones to be used in building inspections. Inspectors will be certified to ensure understanding of aviation regulations, operating requirements, and procedures for safely flying drones. We are hearing appreciation from the public about the ease in submitting annexation forms and written testimony on Planning Commission hearings.

I have signed an agreement for a reconnaissance-level survey and National Registry of Historic Places Eligibility update for the Grant Neighborhood. The consultant will resurvey 120 parcels

and update the existing state database. A report will be produced for the Historic Landmarks Commission.

COVID

City boards and commissions are staying virtual, for now.

The City's employee clinic, the Health Hub, has had more COVID tests in the past couple of weeks than in the previous two months.

The City's dining tent program expires in September. Before the current COVID surge, we expected that by October about half the number of current tent users would transition to platforms under the program approved by City Council. In recognition of COVID's ongoing impacts, a fee won't be charged until July 2022. The maximum number of spaces City Council approved for dining platforms is less than two percent (2%) of the number of parking spaces available in the downtown parking district and supported by the parking tax.

Emergency Management

The City's Emergency Manager, Greg Walsh, has been selected to participate in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Master Exercise Practitioner Program. The program is highly competitive and challenging. Greg's acceptance into this program is a significant achievement. He will bring back new and enhanced skills that will raise the bar for our emergency management training and preparation.

Library

The grand reopening of the Salem Public Library is scheduled for September 25.

Partnerships and Cooperation

The Salem Chamber and SEDCOR are hosting a joint presentation on Our Salem and the work of the Climate Action Task Force. Eunice Kim and Patricia Farrell will provide a high-level update on where each project is currently and will share information on what is to come.

Policing

Chief Womack requested a meeting with the Community Policing Assessment Steering Committee. He shared information from his six-month update report and specific actions underway in response to the audit. The committee appreciated the update on the status of all assessment findings, the department's strategic plan process, and the department's mission, vision, and values statements.

Sheltering and Assistance

The Planning Commission is considering zoning changes for managed camping and warming centers. The changes will likely be ready for City Council consideration in November.

For the navigation center, we are planning renovations that will allow use of the building as a temperature-activated warming shelter this winter. Full opening of the navigation center will be Spring of 2022.

This past week, the City posted for removal more than 80 vehicles at Cascades Gateway Park, notifying the owners of the need to empty the parking lot by August 18. During the notifications, the City towed four vehicles and a stolen U-Haul truck. Police and outreach navigators from the Salem Housing Authority have been consistently informing people of the City's park restoration plan. The park will close August 19 for an undetermined length of time. The City is increasing our outreach to inform and encourage people to move to appropriate shelter locations, including providing free towing, donated gas cards, and bags for people leaving the park.

Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT)

I have signed an agreement with Travel Salem for Travel Salem to serve as the City's destination marketing organization. Travel Salem was the only responder to the City's request for proposals. Travel Salem will continue to receive the 25% of the transient occupancy tax and the full amount, less City administrative expenses, of the Tourism Improvement District assessment. The initial term is five years, with a five-year renewal. The City, through the mayor, may appoint one member to the Travel Salem board of directors. Travel Salem will be required to submit reports to the City. The prohibition on the use of TOT funds by Travel Salem to purchase alcohol remains; Travel Salem can use the Tourism Improvement District assessment for the purchase of alcohol.

Following the recommendation of the City's TOT advisory board, I signed grant agreements with:

- Deepwood Museum – Facility Operator Grant – \$31,780
- Deepwood Museum – Event – Plant Sale - \$2,000
- Enlace Cross Cultural – Event – 2021 Hispanic Heritage Month – \$2,000
- Oregon Symphony Association in Salem – Event - 2022 Salem Concert Season - \$7,500
- Oregon Symphony Association in Salem – Event - 2022 Salem Young Peoples Concert - \$7500

Upcoming Issues

On August 16, the Planning Commission will be holding a third work session on proposed changes to the Central Business District, Fairview Mixed Use, and Airport Overlay zones. Other potential code changes involve annexation procedures, bicycle parking, transit stops, and commercial parking. The Planning Commission will be considering options for managed temporary camping and for warming centers. Additional changes under consideration include amendments for middle housing.

Thanks for reading,
Steve