

## Our City

As was to be expected folks came to the City Council meeting two weeks ago a bit more than upset and they were expecting answers. I couldn't give them the one they wanted and I don't know that I will be able to this Wednesday either, but it hasn't been for the lack of effort on behalf of the City's Water and Waste Water crew and Clerk Robyn Herndon. Trust me when I say they are working for you! The matter of flooded basements during heavy rains on the night of May 21<sup>st</sup> still remains uncertain with respect to claims being paid by the City's insurance carrier. I know it is little comfort to the affected home owners; but efforts are being made as we endeavor to do what is right for everyone. My grandfather used to say, "Marc, steers try, son; but the bull gets it done!" I feel somewhat like the steer in this case; I am not sure I can get done what is best for all involved and I know trying is not enough for those who have been affected.

As vandalism once again plagues our community now that school is out, I am not sure the efforts of some of our parents or guardians are equal to the task. The damage recently done to William Thomas Middle School and the Intermediate School is reprehensible. As is the ongoing lack of supervision that persists through the summer months. Juveniles found out and about after 11 at night will be picked up and detained until their parents come to collect them. I fully understand that many parents have to work shifts and possibly more than one job; but that does not eliminate the responsibilities of supervision and guardianship. I know too that the majority of parents do their very best by their children, yet it is those few who choose to neglect the responsibility who make circumstances more difficult for the rest.

On a similar note please be mindful that fireworks are prohibited in City Parks and other public grounds as this weekend and the 4<sup>th</sup> of July come to pass. If you happen to be at Willow Bay, Candice Reynolds will have a designated area for campers to light a few if they wish, in celebration of our country's independence. Please be respectful of property that is not yours and those common areas that belong to all of us.

I believe that all of you who have had a chance to drive down Fort Hall Avenue from Harrison to the Bypass will agree that the work facilitated by Mark Scherer, Karl Kozain, Mason Chacon along with Jeff Nelson was a huge improvement; as was the section of McKinley from Falls Avenue to Teton Street. The new "micro-seal" process may well save many of our streets as our long-term street plan is implemented. Welcome Mason Chacon as the City's newest employee. Some of you may know Mason as he graduated in May and was selected by the staff as this year's recipient of the "Work Ethic Elite" award. He will fit in quite well.

Clerk Robyn Herndon, the rest of the superintendents, City Council members and I continue to work through the budgeting process. Frankly, things are tight as revenues remain more or less flat. One line item in the Street budget did receive an increase due to increased transportation funding authorized during the last legislative session; thank you Senator Guthrie and Representatives Andrus and Packer. Be forewarned that we are considering a slight increase in fees: \$0.25 in Sewer, \$0.25 in Water and \$0.50 in Sanitation. The increases in Sewer and

Water will get us to the point, I believe, where we can meet the obligation of paying off our bonds and still be able to maintain and improve services. The increase in Sanitation will be used primarily for the purchase of new garbage cans as many that are in service need to be replaced. In a similar vein we are also considering a “payment assistance program;” in which home owners who qualify for the County’s Circuit Breaker program will also qualify for five percent or a four dollar decrease in their monthly payment, it is the right thing to do.

We discussed the right things to do during a Ferry Hollow Trail committee meeting last Thursday. Specifically how to keep hikers and bikers on the designated trail and off private property. It seems the few are always bent on ruining things for the many as they continue to trespass, dump garbage and damage property that is not theirs. If the trail becomes a reality I would hope the expectations of those who use it are higher than those abusing areas now.

I was at the Power County, University of Idaho Vandal Boosters barbeque a week ago where I had the opportunity to visit with several alumni. I particularly enjoyed my conversation with Lee Kress as it centered around expectations, his daughter Brenda, son Thomas, grandson Jared and our Ag Program. While the curriculum within the program is quite diverse and can help focus a student’s future interests as Lee aptly pointed out it is the “soft skills” they learn that are so important; those of speaking, listening, responsibility and leadership. His comments pleased me greatly as he validated what I have always believed to be the true value of an Ag Program that realizes its full potential. Has my program always been thus? No. When I was coaching three sports and trying to run a proper Ag Program the expectations may have been there but the results were somewhat different than what they are today. “A man has to know his limitations,” is one of the best lines in Clint Eastwood’s Dirty Harry series; it took me a while; but I finally realized mine.

I realized that I couldn’t do more than a few things at any given time well. However, I have long known that I could do very little really well by myself. Which is why I remain ever thankful to our City’s employees and the City Council for the wonderful job that they do. And, why for 25 years I have been extremely thankful for the support the families and businesses of Power County have given our Ag Program.

I was doing a project visit with Jaxson Burgemeister, son of Jeff and Dennise, last week and as often happens ended up at the dining room table working on his records with him. Dennise joined us as we were finishing up. Jaxson’s parents and grandparents attended our Chapter Banquet in May and Dennise wanted to know what Jaxson had to do to qualify for the awards and offices that were conferred on some of the older members. In short she wanted to know if there were any limitations on what Jaxson could do or accomplish. I told her it basically comes down to “real world work experiences” and developing those “soft skills” Lee Kress and I had talked about. As with anything there are few limitations on what one can accomplish should dedication accompany desire. To that same end I remain vigilant; I hope my efforts don’t disappoint those they affect.

Until next week...