

Our City

I will probably be called to the mat for the authorization I gave Street Superintendent Daren Dahlke Friday morning a bit before 7:00 am., but I am good with that. Prior to the chip-sealing project beginning last Friday morning, written notices were hand-delivered to all property owners who would be affected by the project. The notice asked them to remove their vehicles from the streets that were to be chip-sealed so that the project involving the City's Street Department, the County Highway District and City Water and Waste Water personnel could proceed without interference to equipment and without damage to private vehicles that are normally parked on the streets. To those that remembered to temporarily park their vehicles someplace other than on the street, I say thank you very much. For those who forgot and needed a phone call, thank you for quickly complying with the notice after the reminder. To the property owner who police tried to contact several times early Friday morning and I personally tried to call three times to no avail, I apologize for your vehicles being towed at your expense; however, I was left with little choice from a liability standpoint.

As the citywide project proceeded last Friday, most folks complied with slight detours to their travel plans. But, some thought they could bypass the barricades and drive into the middle of the project before it was completed. One driver found himself in an "OH, ---t" moment when he came face to face with the oil semi-truck, gravel spreader and two huge pneumatic rollers with no place to go but back from where he came.

This portion of the project was completed by about 1:30 pm. last Friday. To all those that helped in its successful completion I say, "Great Job!" The second part of the project, the seal part, is scheduled to be done later on the 10th of July, which is a Sunday and traffic should be less inconvenienced. This process will be slower as the oil seal will need to dry for a few hours before it can be driven on without splashing up on passing vehicles. The City's requests will be the same as they were last Friday and traffic control will be stricter and tighter as we don't want oil spattered on your cars. Unlike last Friday, once the oil has been applied, streets will remain closed until they can safely accommodate traffic. Depending on weather, this could be several hours. Yes, it will be more inconvenient; but the project will insure the longevity of these streets well into the future. A few hours should be worth that. I hope you agree. Again, thanks in advance for your understanding and cooperation.

I also spent time Friday going over the budget with our City Clerk, Robyn Herndon, as she was in the process of finalizing figures for insurance increases and promotional raises. I know I have said it before, but it warrants repeating how frugal your City departmental superintendents are with your money. They make what the City receives from you go an awfully long ways.

Prior to Friday's chip-seal project City crews were no less hard at work. The street department replaced Petrol's stop sign again; completed several asphalt patch backs; saw several sidewalks poured and fixed on Van Buren and Tyler; placed temporary crosswalk signs and blinking lights for lunch-in-the-park program for our kids; then concluded Thursday by placing barricades for Friday's project. The water crew continues to exercise water valves so that they work when needed; they gathered more global positioning coordinates for residential locations that will then be uploaded to our Global Information System so trouble spots can be easily

identified, found and fixed. The Grounds crew began the week by removing several large cottonwood branches from along Howard Street that came down in the recent winds; they also spent time testing sprinklers for optimum coverage and fixing a mainline break at Lee Street Park; tree pruning continues out at Willow Bay; and Saturday saw the first night golf tournament of the season.

As we look forward to the Fourth of July weekend, I ask that you all be mindful of your neighbors as you celebrate the country's independence. Be safe and respectful in your use of fireworks. Be safe in the water if you visit Willow Bay, recreate on the reservoir or fish the river. Be safe if you travel. Enjoy what is predicted to be perfect weather for the occasion. And, as your family and friends gather, take the time to appreciate what it is we have that makes this community and country so uniquely great. It should give you cause to reflect; I know it does me.

Until next week...