

Our City

I skipped my walk this morning so I could write this column and get it to Brett Crompton later today in anticipation of the Labor Day weekend. Much of my weekend will be spent with FFA members at Stotz Equipment trying to finish the job we started last weekend in getting their equipment yard presentable for an industry tour that is scheduled there in a few days. Lately it seems like I have been doing that more often than not; putting off one thing so that I could get another done. I am sure it happens to most of us at one time or another; and it happens within the confines of City affairs and business as well. Some would say it is just a matter of time management and priorities. They may be right - I don't know. Sometimes it just seems like there is not enough time to get it all done.

A case in point was brought to my attention when I arrived at City Hall yesterday in preparation for three meetings that I had scheduled for the next hour and a half to two hours. Clerk Robyn Herndon had received a visit from a concerned citizen earlier in the day. Robyn's visitor was concerned about a part of the downtown landscaping that seems to be dying for some reason and the fact that grounds around City Hall are not as presentable as they should be with overgrown shrubs and trees. Coincidentally, I had a citizen drop in between meetings bringing two other areas of apparent oversight to my attention. Both citizens were rightfully concerned in my opinion; and as Mayor I have no real defense especially about the appearance of the grounds around City Hall. Honestly too, it has been a concern of mine for years but one I have failed to adequately address as City crews have always seemed to be tasked with more important things. But then, as I said to Robyn after all the meetings, "It's hard not to feel like a hypocrite when I espouse one thing for all our citizens and their property yet let things around City Hall look less than presentable." As such it was never my intent and for that I apologize.

I will be speaking with City personnel later this morning to see if they can fit in removing all the unsightly shrubbery and dead trees around City Hall in the next few days. I don't honestly don't know if it will happen, as Labor Day is upon us, and preparation work has started at Willow Bay for the paving project that will be completed next month. Most of our seasonal employees have gone back to school and the Street and Water Departments are still down one person each. That being said, if the cleanup can be done without neglecting something else, it will be done as soon as possible. Any new landscaping around City Hall will be more maintenance friendly and less prone to overgrowth. It may be too little too late; however, at this point I cannot change that.

On a more positive note my 3:30 meeting yesterday found me with School Board Chairman Bruce Hauber and School Superintendent Dr. Ron Bolinger as we signed a memorandum of understanding that will insure the maintenance and longevity of the tennis courts that will begin to be constructed later this fall. Thank you once again to all the private donors that contributed to the Tennis Court fund through AF Impact, the Power County Commissioners, the Power County Highway District, American Falls School District and the City of American Falls for their contributions in time, funding, and labor that will finally make this project a reality. And, a very special thank you to Jeremy Peirsol for his continued efforts over the past three to four years in making this project happen. Jeremy sent the grant application off today to the United States Tennis Association for the acquisition of the final funding piece. I know it

is one of his final goals to see construction begin on the courts before he leaves us in October for his new life in Boise.

As October is a month away and temperatures seem to be cooling, fall is around the corner. I asked the Historical Commission to preview our community's fall yards and flower gardens for fall recognition. My thanks to the group for their continued efforts. The Commission's Chair Don Johnson's report follows: "With autumn upon us it's not easy to keep a yard full of beautiful flowers. Some of our neighbors are to be congratulated for brightening our slide into cooler weather. The most outstanding yard is again 905 Hillcrest with twelve others leading the field of runners-up: 554 Hillcrest, 355 Autumn Way, 470 Adams, 385 Jefferson, 650 Bennett, 904 Reed, 193 Howard, 121 Hayes, 433 Hayes, 355 McKinley, 330 Lincoln, and 729 Ft. Hall."

Perhaps with some forethought, planning and a maintenance schedule, City Hall may once again be as presentable as the properties above. It's a lofty goal I know; but nonetheless worthy of our efforts. My continued thanks to the citizens who through their concerns and constructive input help make the City of American Falls a better place to live for all of us. To the City personnel who make it all happen, as they to a person continue to make their best better in efforts of making American Falls the best place to live I say, "You are all so wonderfully awesome!"

Until next week...