

Our City

As I resumed my role as the City coordinator last week, it became apparent as I read through Superintendent Pete Cortez's weekly agenda and progress report that even the one degree of separation I had experienced in not attending the weekly superintendents' meeting, as Jeremy Peirsol would brief me after, this last year left me slightly out of the loop and missing some details. Don't get me wrong, Jeremy our Public Works Coordinator, and the other superintendents have been doing a wonderful job. It was me that lost sight on a few ongoing details and concerns that need my attention. It's no one's fault but my own and no real concern for you but more often than not, details matter. More importantly, follow through matters. Typically follow through requires attention to detail, persistent and consistent communication and that was difficult for me to maintain with one degree of separation.

The one degree of separation disappeared and the details became clear last week while the superintendents and I discussed the Willow Bay Paving and Improvement grant as the bid came in surprisingly under budget. Because the bid awarded to Michaelson Construction by the City Council last Wednesday came in under budget it will allow superintendents Moldenhauer, Dahlke and Peirsol to work with the construction company and their subcontractors to expand the previously planned scope of paving, improve the irrigation systems and its associated landscaping while possibly being able to renovate the C-Store into a central gathering place complete with showers and a lounging area. All in all the entire facility will be vastly improved. These improvements along with the complete electrical upgrade received a year ago via another grant written by Jeremy and our partners at JUB engineering should see the Willow Bay Campground as a premier destination for RV and tent campers alike.

With the expanded scope of the Willow Bay Campground project allowed by the extended bid budget, our City crews may be tasked there a bit longer than previously thought. If such is the case, and depending on weather, the tennis court project may need to be moved to early spring. Which in itself may not be entirely bad as it will allow time to secure the balance of funds needed to complete the project. If you recall that project is about \$8,000 short of the total required funds need to finish it. We currently have enough funding to complete everything except about half of the final "tennis court surface." Estimates put the final surfacing at about \$15,000. I will be working with Lisa Leyshon of AF Impact and others this winter to come up with the remaining funds. Like the Skateboard Park completed a few years ago, raising all the funds from multiple entities is often a long, drawn out process, but it can be done. The Tennis Courts will be done as well. I am looking forward to that day as I know many of you are as well.

I am also looking forward to working again with our partners at JUB engineering as we pursue the Community Development Block Grant that will allow us to reengineer Hospital Hill to better accommodate traffic and storm water. Concerns about this grant have been rightfully raised by superintendents Dahlke and Cortez, as it will be funds from their budgets that allow us to meet our cash match for the grant. Daren Dahlke's concern was that the final project would not change curb and gutter elevations and essentially put new asphalt over the existing road bed and not improve the drivability of the street. In talking with Alan Giesbrecht of JUB he has assured me that through computer modeling and engineering, Hospital Hill will be

redesigned to better accommodate traffic and storm water. As we move forward with this grant application and process I will be working with JUB, Dahlke and Cortez to make sure we make the most efficient use of our funds and resources; getting the most bang for our buck.

Last Thursday there wasn't a bang but I bet it was a surprise when the geyser appeared on Fort Hall between Harrison and Idaho Streets. It was one of those things you hope never happens but does occasionally manifest itself regardless of precautions. As Direct Communications began to bore under Fort Hall, the water main was properly located and identified by the City Water Department. However, the line was labeled as cast iron on the map that was available. Due to the busy schedule maintained in the Water Department the new information actually showing the PVC water main has not been up loaded to the Global Information System (GIS). Thus when the drilling crew found the old abandoned cast iron line, they thought they had bypassed the water service. Shortly after their boring machine punctured the PVC water main, which in turn caused the mess on Fort Hall and emergency repairs that had to be made by both our City Water and Street Departments. It was an unfortunate accident and one the City will likely bear most of the cost of repairing. Honest mistakes happen when all the details are not included in an action plan. This honest mistake is one we will learn from. Details matter, whether new or old, and they must be communicated effectively as we continue to move American Falls forward through a variety of projects that make ours the best place to live.

Until next week...