

## Our City

Wow, February 4, 2017. We just finished our first full week of school since December 16<sup>th</sup>. The temperature outside is a balmy 39 at 4:30 am. If I didn't know better, I would say it felt like spring. The temperature and predicted rains on and off through the coming week have me worried about potential flooding; and I am sure I am not alone in that regard. I can imagine those with livestock out in the county and elsewhere would prefer a different weather pattern as well; as many are into calving and lambing season. But, we play the hand we are dealt so to speak; sand is piled near the golf club house and the city has laid in a supply of sand bags for your use when and if Bingham Coop and Ace Hardware run out. I am still working on a plan to help those less able if and when we get another dump of snow; thankfully last week was relatively kind weatherwise. Last week for me focused primarily on the months to come and it was nice not to have to worry about vast accumulations of snow or flooding.

A lot of my attention was spent on Willow Bay and the emergency by-pass. During last Wednesday's City Council meeting, on Tamby Gilley's request the council voted to increase the length of her contract at the campground through October 31, 2021 which is when our lease with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) terminates. Both Tamby and the city have been making a lot of improvements at the campground and we all want to see a return on our investments. There is still some paving that needs to be done to complete the grant that was started last fall; obviously that is a few months away even though at 39 degrees spring feels closer than it has in awhile.

Before the Council meeting on Wednesday I had the opportunity to talk with Stan Gortsema and Ron Andersen, our friends at the Power County Water Ways (PCWW). The PCWW has set aside funds to construct a vaulted toilet near the Willow Bay boat ramp this spring. It will be handicapped accessible, a welcome addition to the other improvements around the campground. The thanks of those who use the recreational area, the City Council and myself goes out to the PCWW.

In a somewhat related matter I met with Cody Moldenhauer, Chris Fehringer, Kurtis Workman and Gilbert Hofmeister on Thursday to discuss architectural plans for new restrooms at the Willow Bay Café. In reviewing the five proposals, two stood out as being the most practical fiscally and for ease of construction. Both provide for separate ADA restrooms and an increase in storage. We will be reviewing the plans further this week and meeting with Margee Beebe of the BOR later this winter to discuss funding and possible construction. Once those details are solidified the matter will be placed before the City Council for their consideration.

As we finish existing projects and make plans for new ones folks are lining up to use the Willow Bay facilities. The annual American Falls Classic Carp Tournament is scheduled for May 20 and 21. The tournament sponsors are estimating at least 80 two-person teams. The tournament is double what it was when it began just a few years ago. The sponsors of the event, the Rocky Mountain Bowfishing Association, also approached the Council about possibly hosting the World Championship Tournament in 2018 with a possible 150 to 200 teams. The Council's collective reply was, "How can we help?"

In a similar note, but vastly bigger, I received a call from Tom Henesh yesterday. I confirmed for him the golf special the City Council had approved for his campers at Indian Springs and he informed me of some big news. The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) will be hosting their annual event at Indian Springs this year; which sounded pretty cool to me. I said, "How can we help?" He said, "There will be between 1200 and 1500 campers at the eight-day event; some of which are already planning on staying for the entire month." Way cool indeed! Of course the City and I am sure the Chamber of Commerce will be working with Tom to make the event everything it can be. Thanks Tom for the awesome news!

It may well be winter but I am excited about the months to come. I remain thankful to our community which continually works together for the betterment of all. Without a doubt making American Falls the best place to live.

Until next week...