

## Our City

It has been a busy two week for the American Falls FFA Ag Issues team. In total the team has presented the issue of the proposed trail from Seagull Bay to Massacre Rock State Park to 14 different groups. The general consensus has been favorable but everyone understands the almost overwhelming logistics of a 25 mile trail that involves the use of Federal, State, County, City and private property. Beyond that general consensus and understanding little else has been done. As a City we are awaiting the results of our Idaho Gem Grant application, that if successful, will allow us to address the real meat and potatoes questions of where the trail would actually go, who would manage given portions and how would it be paid for. Should we be successful in that endeavor we will apply for a Federal Lands Access Program grant that would allow for the construction of some new trail segments and possibly the reconstruction of the existing Willow Bay Trail.

Again, it is mostly pie in the sky right now, but I do thank the Chamber of Commerce, City Council, County Commissioners, County Highway Commission, Lions Club, Rotary Club, PEO Sisterhood, Pocatello City Council, Southeast Idaho Trout Unlimited, Police Chief Wilkinson and Sheriff Jeffries, Great Rift Business Development Organization Director Jensen and Senator Jim Guthrie along with several of his legislative cohorts for allowing the FFA members and myself the opportunity to share our thoughts and vision of what could be and the challenges that exist in the entire process. I will also say that the team of Marializ Barrera, Katia Sanchez, Alyiah Pedraza, Juan Ramirez, Rosa Mata, Guadalupe Murillo and Josue Morales have done a very good job of presenting sentiments both in favor of the trail and those at least reticent or outright opposed.

There are many more property owners and managers to speak with before any real progress is made on the proposed trail, but as the saying goes, every journey begins with a single step. In that same regard each of the City superintendents, department heads, City Council members and I have spent the last year meticulously reviewing and proposing changes to the City Code. It is my hope that this week, spring break for teachers, that I will have the time with Clerk Herndon and our attorney Heidi Buck Morrison to review all the proposed changes and have recommendations ready for public hearing next month. In that same vein I will be reviewing the now available annexation materials with both Herndon and Buck Morrison along with our Building Administrator Jeff Nelson this week. I hope to have a plan in place sooner rather than later as to where and if we will begin the annexation process. I know both the City Code and annexation have been on my to-do-list for nearly a year; and as another saying goes, we truly seem to be progressing at the speed of government.

But; even though the system is ponderous it does make headway, I received word last week, finally, that funds were now available through USDA Rural Development for needed firefighter equipment. I hope to meet this week also with the Rural Fire Commissioners to discuss how to best make use of grant and local funds. I know our turnouts, firefighting protective gear, are in real need of being replaced. Recall, through cooperative purchasing power and the funds from a FEMA grant Rural and City Fire was able to purchase 20 self-contained-breathing-apparatus units and the filling station needed for them. Hopefully with similar efforts the turnouts can be replaced in the near future bringing the Fire Department into a much better place than they were a year ago.

It looks like Spring may actually spring this week, with temperatures in the 50's and minimal rain in the forecast. I am enjoying the longer days and sunshine. On the good news front, the golf course will open this week as you read this edition of the Power County Press on Wednesday, March 20<sup>th</sup>. Enjoy!

Until next week...