

Our City

I sat down with new City Councilman Jason Povey about a month ago to do some work on the goals of the City's strategic plan. It was the first real conversation either of us had had with the other. One of the things we discussed was the need to identify the positive things that were being done by our neighbors that in some way add value to our community. It has been a while since I had talked about our Good Neighbor recognition program so I welcomed the conversation; because as much as I and the Council work to make American Falls a place we can all be proud to call home it is really our citizens that make everything we do possible. Recognizing those that make a real contributions is something I very much enjoy.

To our Good Neighbors:

Don Carlson. Don doesn't live right in town yet he has called American Falls home for over 60 years. Don called me last week to discuss a piece I had written about the proposed Ferry Hollow Trail and the garbage that I had found along one of the sites located on Bureau of Reclamation managed land. Unknown to me for the past several years Don has been cleaning up garbage left by campers and fishermen along the Snake River's east bank from Chicken Falls to and through the Pipeline campground and other areas most frequented by those fishing or camping. I have taken FFA members down to the same area the last few years to do the same thing only to find it almost devoid of garbage. Now I know why. Don doesn't venture down to the area where I found the garbage but knew well where it was. Don and I discussed other aspects of the trail and while we didn't agree on everything I know his heart and efforts are reflected in his deeds and actions. I am pleased to be able to thank him for being such a wonderful sportsman and a Good Neighbor!

Gary Ferguson, Kevin Lynott, Tim Rudeen, Doug Nilsson and Traci Woodworth. These five folks are the non-City associated members of the Water Working Group. They are your neighbors; and for the past four months have dedicated scores of hours to finding a solution to the multiple issues that face our water distribution system and the amount of water each of us uses, especially during the summer months. I selected them specifically because their views on this issue were strongly different than mine. You don't solve hard problems using only one point of view or perspective; the hard problems get solved when all the differing opinions and ideas merge to a common goal. While this group of Good Neighbors still has some work ahead of them it is appropriate to thank them for their exceptional work and diligence on your behalf now. I would be remiss if I didn't also thank Councilmembers Hofmeister, Povey and Sorensen along with Water Superintendent Scott Dalling, Clerk Miller and Colter Hollingshead of Keller and Associates engineering for their outstanding work as part of this group.

Finally, to the group of 30 or so of our neighbors who last Tuesday came to a City meeting to learn what an Urban Renewal Agency is, what is it not, what it can do and what it cannot. Whether you agree with an idea or not if you have the gumption to come to a meeting in the middle of the afternoon on a week day you have my appreciation and respect. I know a lot of stories and talk have been floating around town and on social media (I am told) about the City Council's consideration of forming an Urban Renewal Agency; my thanks to the Good Neighbors who chose to find out the facts for themselves. Similarly, when I spoke to the Chamber of Commerce on Thursday concerns were voiced there as well. My responses were

direct, honest and informed. To the 50 or so of you I spoke with last week about this issue, thanks for your interest, your willingness to get out and ask questions and being part of the solution finding process. Good Neighbors, one and all! Thank you so much!

Until next week...