

Friday June 3, 2016

Good Friday afternoon everyone! It is great to be back after a few relaxing days out of the area. I would like to thank Sheila for stepping in last week while I was gone and allowing me to really enjoy those last few days. It is always difficult to let go of things, even for a short time, but it makes a big difference in the long run. So hey, back to work and back to the issues at hand.

The Highway 138 Corridor project continues to move forward. I can finally see how the realignment of the Washington/Stephens/Pine intersection is going to look as they begin to excavate the path of the future roadway through the old Honda car lot site. Crews have also removed the northern barriers on the Oak Avenue Bridge and will be installing new barriers and railings on both Oak Avenue and Washington Avenue bridges. They are continuing to work on railroad crossings and the Spruce Street section between Washington and Oak has basically been completed. The realignment of Spruce will allow us to provide safer and more expedient access across Oak to the southeast area of town.



Council recently awarded the construction contract and the construction management contract for the City's Spruce/Parrott project that will continue the improvements southward to Mosher Street. The preconstruction meeting with the contractor will be held next week and we anticipate work will begin later this month. Public Works staff also held their preconstruction meeting with the parking structure contractor this week. Much of the preliminary work will be done off site, so they have targeted a start date right after Graffiti weekend. We have a number of additional projects in various stages of design, bid award and construction including our street overlay and slurry seal projects that will all start after the beginning of the new fiscal year in July.

Tuesday afternoon I attended a Rotary River Rescue unveiling at River Forks Park. The ceremony was very well attended including Mayor Rich and Councilor Eggers, members of Rotary, representatives from the YMCA, the City and Douglas County. Rotary is installing safety equipment at a number of swimming holes around central Douglas County. The equipment includes a throwable life ring attached to a rope and signage showing instructions on how to use the equipment in a life threatening event. In addition to River Forks Park, installations will occur in Stewart Park and at Templin Beach Park. There will be signs honoring three recent drowning victims included, one



at each of these parks, as a memorial to those youth that we lost and as a reminder of how dangerous moving water can be.

Friday afternoon the CHART Leadership Committee will be meeting to finalize the federal grant request for reimbursement for some of the costs associated with October 1st and the community reinvestment in necessary future services directly related to victims of the incident. Most of those services will center on continuing mental health care, trauma informed care training, and resource coordination throughout the County. A number of service organizations and quasi-governmental entities have put in proposals that are being considered for inclusion in the grant. Law enforcement training and enhancements are not eligible for this grant, but we are considering additional grant resources through the federal government relating to community policing and SRO enhancement. We are continuing our dialogue with Glide Schools to see if we can meet their need for an SRO this year as a complement to our expanded community policing plans. A contract with Glide Schools would cover the cost of time allocated to them and leave us with only a portion of the cost that would be allocated to enhance enforcement during the peak months that school is not in session.

I always like to end these messages on a positive, and this will end on a positive note. But it starts out, well, not so positive. I was very disappointed to arrive home from vacation and read the editorial regarding the News Review's opposition to the recent decision to adopt an enhanced law enforcement area ordinance. I was not so disappointed that they disagreed with decision. That is their prerogative. The fact that they somehow morphed their disagreement with the ordinance into a general mistrust for local government and law enforcement was my concern. Without going into a lot of detail, I just want to say that I have the utmost respect for our entire law enforcement team from Chief Burge and Captain Matthews through our entire police force. We have developed great community and organizational support for our law enforcement folks and they have earned it. They are hardworking and dedicated to the wellbeing of our citizens and our community and I want to make sure that you all know how personally we take our responsibilities to our citizens. Like all other ordinances passed by Council, we will endeavor to carry them out in fair, transparent and ethical manner.

I want to personally thank every law enforcement person and every City employee for their hard work and dedication. If it was easy, anyone could do it. I am glad we are this team. Thanks for your support! Have a great weekend everyone. It sounds like it will be a scorcher.