

Friday August 28, 2015

Good Friday afternoon everyone! Based on the weather forecasts I've seen it appears that it might be cooling off a little, and maybe even rain a little over the weekend. Wouldn't that be a nice break for a few days? Of course, warm with a little rain this time of year certainly beats cold with a little rain.

Once again, thanks for your attendance and support at the last Council meeting. We are looking forward to working with Mr. Ray Bartram, the new potential owner of the Willis House, to create a positive and vibrant area in our downtown. Having active work spaces and customer interaction is one of the most important factors in turning a business neighborhood around. In addition to working with Ray, on Thursday Chief Burge and representatives from NeighborWorks Umpqua and the Grand Hotel met with other businesses in that area to discuss their concerns and agreed to meet again next week. Their primary concerns relate to perception issues, which are not really legal issues, but our Police Department is trying to be proactive and make sure that when illegal activity occurs - folks call 9-1-1. Over the past few weeks Chief Burge and one patrol officer have been spending at least an hour in the area almost every day in an effort to mitigate some of the issues.

Wednesday evening ODOT held its second community open house to allow for public input relating to the Interchange Area Management Plans ("IAMP") for exits 124 and 125. The IAMP process evaluates the current interchange configurations and local street networks to determine what changes and improvements should be made to meet transportation needs for the next 20 years. Based on the preliminary plans, it looks like Harvard Avenue and Garden Valley Boulevard will likely exceed traffic capacity by the time that 20 years rolls around. With that thought in mind, we've asked that they consider even *longer* term impacts – beyond the 20 years. We want to make sure that the improvements are evaluated and made with the projected longer term impacts on our local streets taken into consideration. Both Public Works and Community Development staff represent the City on

the work group that meets with the consultants and community interest groups to provide our input on this important plan for the future.

One component of the exit 124 evaluation relates to the redevelopment of the former Douglas Community Hospital site. The developers of that site and the undeveloped property next to the tower have recently completed a transportation study on the impact of both the redevelopment of the existing building and the potential development of the remainder of the site. Their representatives met with Community Development staff and ODOT staff this week to discuss a zone change for the undeveloped parcel. We've been very supportive of a zone change that will allow the site to be developed and we anticipate an application for that zone change will be forthcoming in the near future.

As part of the City's wellness program, we worked with the local chapter of the American Red Cross to hold a mini "blood drive" for City employees and friends on Wednesday. We filled most of the slots available and ultimately were able generate over 20 donations for the local blood supply. Thanks to John VanWinkle for coordinating and setting up the activity and Koree for helping schedule things. I am grateful that our staff gives back to the community in so many ways. Giving blood is truly giving back!

As part of our application for a State Historic Preservation grant for local governments this year we asked for funding for plaques to identify some of our most historic structures in the Downtown Historic District. Community Planner Teresa Clemmons, and her husband Bill Clemens, volunteered to install plaques at the First Presbyterian Church, the George Kolhagen Building, the Howell-Kolhagen House, the Roseburg National Guard Armory and the Judge George R. Willis House.



Thursday evening I attended a book signing event at the Douglas County Museum to launch the recently completed book, "Southern Oregon Timber: The Kenneth Ford Family Legacy" by R.J. Guyer. The book is the co-creation of Mr. Guyer and Ms. Donna Watkins who travelled thousands of miles over the last twenty years interviewing people and evaluating important times and achievements in the life of Mr. Ford and the legacy of the Ford family. It should be an interesting read, and it is clear that Mr. Ford was not only a pioneer in the timber industry but also a pioneer in philanthropy in Douglas County and the other communities that meant so much to him. Our community has probably benefited more than any other from the generosity of the Ford family and it was an honor to attend the book launch.

And speaking of honor, I know everyone is interested in the opportunity to honor Alek Skarlatos for his recent heroic act in helping subdue the terrorist attack on the train in France. While anything we do will pale in comparison to receiving the highest honor the French government could bestow upon a civilian, honors from the American government and military as well as today's appearance on Good Morning America, we will continue to work locally with the family's best interest in mind, to honor Alek in the near

future. The Mayor and staff have been in contact with local media resources, Oregon National Guard representatives and veterans, as well as other elected officials, to try to determine an appropriate venue and timeframe to do a local recognition for Mr. Skarlatos.

With that, have a great weekend everyone! Enjoy the cooler weather.