

Friday January 8, 2016

Good Friday afternoon everyone! It seems like a while since I have written one of these, and I guess it's true. I want to thank Sheila for her help while I was out of the office both in holding down the fort and getting last week's message out. This was another very busy week, or it certainly seemed that way. Monday afternoon I had an opportunity to share some thoughts about where we finished up 2015 and where we are going in 2016 with Kyle Baily on Inside Douglas County. It's always nice to spend that half hour talking about positive things going on the community. As you saw from our annual report a few weeks ago, we accomplished a lot this year, and Monday night, Mayor Rich will provide the community with his perspectives through his annual State of the City address. The State of the City will really be the primary issue on your meeting Monday night and we always look forward to this opportunity.



Tuesday Councilor Marks and I attended a Med Ed leadership committee meeting for the Partnership. We met with representatives from Pac West and began developing a strategy for rural outreach to generate support for the concept. We began assigning folks to reach out to others in rural communities in southern Oregon and around the state to determine the level of interest in providing support. Our primary role is to reach out to local government, but we may need to work with our state and federal delegations periodically to keep them updated on our progress and continue to ask for their support. The Economic Development Commission met and recommended that Council authorize \$15,000 for additional participation in the Partnership effort to move this forward. You will see that request on your meeting agenda for Monday night.

Wednesday I attended the "Snyder Hall" meeting at UCC to help make a committee recommendation to the Board of Trustees regarding the future of that building after the October 1st events at the college. The committee unanimously recommended an option to the Board which was approved Thursday and will be forwarded to State Legislature and Governor's office for funding consideration during the short session coming up in February. The State had indicated that some level of funding was likely to be made available, but we needed to provide a plan, architectural renderings and a budget no later than this week for their consideration. I am grateful for the opportunity to help UCC as they move forward with their healing process and their vision for the future. Students, staff, faculty, administrators and community members met six or seven times in the six weeks as a committee chaired by Board member Betty Tamm.



Thursday I met with Merten Bangemann-Johnson, director of NeighborWorks Umpqua to discuss options for joint participation in a federal grant process that might fund some

community planning for economic development, market rate and subsidized housing, and neighborhood public and private reinvestment. Previous work done in conjunction with the City, SERVICE and DRA resulted in the Heart of Roseburg branding designation as well as an upcoming Art Integration planning effort. We will look at the possibility of supporting a “Choice Neighborhoods Planning Grant Program” application that would allow us to look in much more detail at the same area and inventory and plan for public and, more importantly, private investment in the downtown and south Roseburg area. In the next week or two, Public Works, Public Safety and Community Development staff will have opportunities to review the application information and provide input prior to moving forward.



Friday Nikki Messenger and I attended the South West Area Commission on Transportation meeting in Coquille. Nikki presented a proposal to the SWACT for potential STIP funding for a sidewalk, bike lane and road improvement on Douglas Avenue from Fowler east to the City Limits. Based on the initial review, our project will move forward in the scoping/analysis process and we will revisit the four remaining projects in April to determine the Committee’s highest priorities. Nikki did a great job presenting our project in accordance with STIP criteria and after initial review, it appears that the project is one of the top two choices. Given the small amount of money available and the number of projects from our region, likely only one SWACT project will receive funding. We will keep you posted.

Lastly, the Coastal Farm Supply store is making progress despite the current weather conditions. They still hope to open late spring or early summer. The former Douglas Community Hospital site, now Harvard West, also broke ground this week. Earth work and vegetation clearing is underway and they will begin internal demo work and preparation for about a 40,000 addition to the tower soon. We continue to work with both development teams as they move into the construction process. Clint Newell Motors and Lithia Motors both have renovations going at this time as well. It’s great to see our local businesses reinvesting in their facilities and to see the new development.



Have a great weekend everyone. We will see you all at your meeting Monday evening at 7:00 p.m.