

Friday May 29, 2015

Good Friday afternoon everyone. It appears the summer weather has started a little earlier than many of us had hoped. It looks like at least a week of high 70s to low or mid-80s is in store which means a major transition in the parks (irrigation starts early) and likely more park utilization. I hope you all had a chance to look at the Roseburg Parks & Recreation Guide that was recently published. If you didn't, you can find it on our website at http://www.cityofroseburg.org/files/2214/3284/8548/2015_Rec_Guide.pdf. The Guide includes information about sponsored and co-sponsored events like the Movies in the Park, the Roseburg Hometown 4th of July Fireworks, the Umpqua River Run and many adult and youth recreation programs and opportunities. It is amazing how many folks from around the county and throughout the state come to enjoy Stewart Park and the rest of our park system.

On Wednesday I attended a Roseburg Public Schools community work group on early childhood learning. They have asked a number of community leaders, children's advocates and service providers to help provide a forum for discussing the importance of early learning and community support for leveling the playing field for "all children" regardless of their circumstance. The Roseburg school system data indicates that over 70% of the elementary students are eligible for free/reduced lunch and that many suffer from environmental issues related to poverty. As we work to provide opportunities for our citizens through local government, it is important to recognize that supporting recreational and educational opportunities for children and adults can make a major difference in the quality of life for our community.

Public Works staff began removing the old bike path asphalt between the Park Shop and the Golf Pro Shop this week. The removal, which took about three days, will make way for a newly constructed multi-use path in that area. Knife River will likely begin construction of the 10 foot wide path next week. The renovation will include a slight realignment of the path around a couple of large conifers and also provide for drainage near the sand volley ball courts that will allow for year-round enjoyment of the path system. We received a grant from the Recreational Trail System program that will pay for 80% of the project, with most of the local match coming from in-house design and the removal of the existing path system. The contractor has a couple weeks to complete the project, but will likely finish well in advance of the allowable time.





The same contractor, Knife River, also provided the low bid on the path reconstruction project at Charles Gardiner Park. The project bid award will be reviewed by the Parks Commission next week and a recommendation will be forwarded to Council sitting as the Urban Renewal Agency Board at your meeting June 8.

Staff is continuing to work on a new communications strategy (Council Goal action item) that we hope to roll out in July that will include an interactive webpage link as well as a Facebook page for the City. As time allows, we will likely add a twitter account and possibly other electronic media presence to reach out to an expanded local audience. We are currently working with legal counsel and staff to make sure we have appropriate policies in place to deal with internal use of the technology as well as issues around “public records”, “records retention” and free speech issues. Once we wrap up the basics we will make a brief presentation to Council and roll out the new strategy. Based on our conversations, we anticipate that a new Council Policy relating to social media will need to be adopted. We will have that in front of Council prior to initiating a Facebook page or Twitter account, but not before the interactive webpage goes online, which we will start up effective July 1 and is like an extension of our existing web presence.

On Thursday, Public Works staff and representatives from i. e. Engineering met with Brown Construction representatives in a pre-construction meeting regarding the Oak/Washington project. We have now signed the construction contract and staff will provide the contractor with a notice to proceed with the work by June 1. Everyone is excited to get the project started and we look forward to working with the contractor and engineers to see that the project goes as smooth as possible. Work is continuing on the waterline project being done in advance of the Highway 138 Corridor project and it’s still on track to be completed in a timely manner.

ODOT received four bids to complete the Highway 138 project last week. The apparent low bidder was Carter & Company Inc. out of Salem with a bid amount of \$10.49 million. That is within the parameters of the scope and budget that had been presented so that process will move forward. Work on this project is scheduled to begin sometime in July and is supposed to begin at the north east end of the project and move south west. Once we see the contractor's phasing we'll let you know if they concur with phasing approach that has been suggested.

Today I am attending the PERS Board meeting in Tigard. The Board will be hearing from PERS staff regarding a number of significant issues including reducing the earnings rate by which our employer rates are based. We'll also get an update on the impacts of, and timing for the changes resulting from the Supreme Court decision relating to the legislative changes made in 2013. The decisions the Board makes over the next few months, when combined with the Supreme Court decision, will have lasting impacts on employer rates for the foreseeable future.

Ok, I can't end this on a downer so go out and have a great weekend and enjoy all that Roseburg has to offer! If you can't think of anything, click on the following link and see what visitors will be looking at this weekend <http://visitroseburg.com/> . And please don't forget the Eastwood Park grand opening and ribbon cutting ceremony next week on Thursday June 4 at 1:30. We hope to see you there.

