

## City Manager's Update — December 17, 2020

Prepared for Mayor and Councilors. Please contact Steve Powers, City Manager, for additional information.

### COVID

The Salem Housing Authority's Redwood Crossings was professionally cleaned and sanitized. There are six residents under quarantine and three of those residents are being housed by Marion County Public Health for quarantine.

In the first 16 days of December, Oregon has lost 350 lives to the pandemic or an average daily loss of life equal to 21.9.

As COVID restrictions continue into the winter months, the City has developed a program to allow coverings and tents so that outdoor dining can continue during inclement weather. In November, City Council approved a grant program to help businesses with the purchase of tents, coverings, heaters, etc. The City is trying to support outdoor dining downtown and be as flexible as possible. This must be balanced with fire and life safety, pedestrian safety, ADA requirements, and consideration of neighboring businesses. Restaurants who want to erect a tent or covering can do so under a simple self-certification process if their tent or covering is under 400 square feet and they attest that:

- It has at least two exits
- It is compliant with NFPA 701 flame retardant standards
- It is 12 feet away from any building or parked vehicle
- That any propane heating tanks are located outside tent and the heater is at least 10 feet from any exit
- Fire Department access is not impeded
- A 5-foot clear pedestrian walkway is maintained

This certification can be found on the [city website](#)

We have worked to quickly disseminate information about the process and requirements. However, some businesses began erecting coverings before learning about these safety requirements and we are working with them to make needed modifications.

The state received federal CARES funding and shared some with the cities. We were hopeful that unspent funds from the cities' allocation would be allocated to cities, such as Salem, that have spent their full share. Unfortunately, there won't be any reallocation to cities; the state is keeping the unspent money.

We will be including in the next utility billing information on assistance with past due utility accounts and a COVID delinquency letter for customers with delinquent balances in December 2020. The information emphasizes the assistance that is available.

### ***Ending Homelessness and Providing Shelter***

Some recent actions by the City and partners:

#### Sheltering

- A duration warming center focused on people aged 65+ with health challenges opened on Portland Road NE December 1.
- Nonprofits opened a duration warming center focused on families. City Council assisted by approving a zoning allowance for the site on State Street.
- Arches operated a hotel program first week of December, with 50 rooms nightly to assist with warming.
- The City initiated the creation of a vehicle repair program. The goal is to prevent the loss of a vehicle for a person who is unsheltered, using the vehicle as a home and parked illegally and therefore at risk of losing the vehicle to a tow. Through a grant to NW Human Services we will provide limited emergency vehicle repair dollars.

#### Housing

- The Salem Housing Authority has been awarded the funding for 20 additional (VASH) Veteran Assisted Supportive Housing Vouchers from the federal Housing and Urban Development Department.

#### Cleanliness

- Large clean-ups at Cascades Gateway, Claggett Creek, and Wallace Marine have removed significant garbage. At Wallace Marine Park, 120 cubic yards, equivalent to 10 City dump trucks, of garbage was removed over two days. In Cascades Gateway Park we made a big dent! We cleared all the major garbage from the forested areas west of Mill Creek – about 36 cubic yards worth of garbage (three heavy dump truck loads). Clean-up at the Claggett Creek Natural Area across from the Salvation Army KROC Center on Bill Frey Drive NE removed approximately 40 cubic yards (3.5 heavy dump truck loads) of garbage and debris from the area.
- In cooperation with the City, ODOT conducted a cleanup of the area north of Front Street the week of November 30. The City cleaned up in the downtown area on December 8.
- A work group of regional partners is addressing issues related to waste management at camping areas throughout the city. In the short-term, we arranged a partnership between ODOT and nonprofit organizations for trash pickup at Market St. and I-5 on December 9.

## Cahoots/CRU

The City met with United Way to develop a plan for the launch of a local Crisis Response Unit. More information was needed, and so a subsequent meeting was held with Cahoots staff. In this second meeting, three key next steps were determined to be necessary to clarify an accurate budget:

- conduct a Request for Information to determine possible operational homes for the program
- conduct a deep systems analysis including dispatch capacity, given trends and needs seen in cities developing similar models,
- hold a meeting with core partners to walk through workflows and test the workflows against common situations.

## *Fire*

Marion County Fire District 1 abuts east Salem. Fire Chief Niblock expects some impacts to Salem as a result of Fire District 1 layoffs. He expects the impacts to be minimal. Salem remains committed to regional mutual aid agreements but that does not include automatic aid to the district due to reductions in their response personnel. Our priority is always to Salem.

## *Management*

Tom Cupani has accepted an appointment to Deputy City Attorney. Tom has been with the City since 2008 and has served as a prosecutor, civil litigator and general counsel. Tom has more than 28 years of legal experience and has a wide range of legal knowledge and experience. Tom replaces Natasha Zimmerman who left the City to join the Marion County Circuit Court.

## *Policing*

The Salem Keizer School District is embarking on two separate but interrelated initiatives to assess and revise (1) school discipline processes and (2) school/student safety. Salem Police will be directly included in the school safety review component but not directly involved with the school discipline process review. In January, SKPS will host the **Student Safety & Well-being Summit** involving partners from community-based organizations, educators, students, and their families. Internal and external experts on subjects such as child abuse prevention, student safety and threat assessment, law enforcement, and the school-to-prison pipeline will provide background and historical perspectives. Participants will focus on a data-driven, research-based process to inform district systems. Student voices will be at the center and include the student task force, student advisory committees and feedback from students affected. An external consultant and facilitator will lead the summit and produce a report to the superintendent on findings and recommendations.

- [Story/press release](#)
- [Exec summary:](#)

Clearly, the District's initiative is much broader than school resource officers. The school resource officers have been reassigned to other duties.

The City's website has information and a [FAQ on protests, assemblies, and marches](#)

We will be adding a statement from Chief Womack regarding his values and approaches to policing.

With the web page, we are inviting more individuals who live in the area of the marches and demonstration to contact us with questions. Some residents have talked with Police (and me) and officers have contacted residents at various times regarding marches. We hear the concerns and questions. Police will use tactics to protect public safety, including citations and a strong presence. Language has been offensive, obscene, and personally objectionable, but has not risen to a level to preemptively stop a march.

### **Projects**

The break from in-person meetings is giving us an opportunity to make improvements to council chambers. New doors, improved restrooms, energy efficiency air handling, fresh air, and roof project all will be done by summer of 2021.

### **Public Works**

I requested information regarding the City's sidewalk program. I thought the criteria may be of interest to you or to constituents who contact you regarding sidewalk replacements. If you would like the information in a different format, please let Tami know,

1. The Sidewalk Response Program utilizes a list of customer service requests broken down by Neighborhood Association. The list is frequently updated.
2. The priority of sidewalk replacement is determined by the hazards found during the sidewalk inspection after the complaint is received combined with the public use of that location.
  - a. Hazard Assessment – Inspection of hazards at that location (No priority of hazards, just measurement of severity and quantity)
    - i. Offset Panels – Panels which have displacement in alignment causing a tripping hazard
    - ii. Surface Spalling – Unraveling of the surface layer of the concrete causing slipping hazards
    - iii. Missing Sections – Areas of missing sections of sidewalk causing tripping hazards
    - iv. Fractured Panels – Panels whose integrity has been compromised due to fracturing
    - v. Cross Slope- Panels which have a lateral displacement outside of federal compliance

- b. Criteria Assessment – Assessment of the Public Use of that Area (Placed in Priority Order)
  - i. ADA Complaint – Area of Complaint is by a person of disabilities surrounding their ability to access or utilize the public infrastructure
  - ii. Critical ADA Route – An area identified in the Transportation System Plan as an essential ADA route for the community
  - iii. State and Local Government – An area identified as a State or Local Government locations utilized by the public (City Hall, Parks, Schools, etc.)
  - iv. Transportation Corridors – Non-Critical ADA routes that are utilized to move goods and people throughout the community.
  - v. Public Accommodation – Areas identified as essential for equal public access such as hospitals, clinics, commercial districts, etc.
  - vi. Residential Streets
  - vii. Cul de Sacs / Dead Ends
- 3. These values will give the property a hazard rating that determines its priority within that neighborhood association.
- 4. A new request will trigger an inspection. If the hazards have changed in severity, or the criteria for use of the sidewalk has changed, the value will reflect the new information and could change that location's replacement priority.

***Happy Holidays!***

Thanks for reading,  
Steve