

Mayor's Report, June, 2016

An oil train derailed in Mosier, our Chief of Police retired after 41 years and a new Chief was hired, a parking task force was appointed, the bicycle task force submitted recommendations for bike lanes to the transportation study group, a marijuana ordinance was finalized and an RV ordinance was adopted. All in the month of June.

In addition, the city gave out Enterprise Zone immediate opportunity grants, adopted a municipal court task force recommendation not to change the court structure and we finished paving Thompson Street.

I point all this out to demonstrate how complicated serving on city council can be. We have elections coming up and we have a few new candidates. It is important to note the time and effort spent every day, every week and every month by these elected officials who do not get paid.

The 4th of July celebration was bigger and better than ever. A new concert series, sponsored by the City of The Dalles and many other sponsors, has opened the door to bigger and better events during the summer for residents. On July 4th, Jeff Stewart's wonderful sculpture of Lewis and Clark and Sacajawea was dedicated, adding to the significance of the Lewis and Clark Festival area.

A very smart person once said, "The arts are not a frill. The arts are a response to our individuality and our nature, and help to shape our identity." Society needs people who think with the creative side of their brains - art stimulates us.

Much of the task force work referred to earlier, including those who responded to the Mosier derailment, is taken on by volunteers. The 4th of July required a large amount of community support in both money donated and volunteers who ran the event. There are many more events supported by volunteers, such as the Ted Walker Swim Meet. It is a testament to the strong fabric of The Dalles and it is getting stronger. If you are not involved, please get involved.

In July, the city hopes to hire a new Human Resources Director, begin its search for a new Planning Director and review a new ordinance for Second Hand Dealers.

Our new fiscal year begins July 1 with the emphasis once again on streets. As the summer progresses, I will attend the Oregon Mayor's Conference and several city council members will travel to Salem for the League of Cities Convention where the issues will be taxation, transportation funding and municipal recreational liability.

We will continue to push for railroad safety, homeless solutions, housing needs, urban renewal restructuring, developing a final proposal for Tokola to build an apartment complex downtown, sale of the Recreation, Granada and the Blue building and bringing new business into The Dalles.

Finally, after many meetings and hearings by the City Council, The Dalles will vote on an ordinance to license and control the times, places and manner in which recreational marijuana is sold, grown and processed. The City Council has also referred the question of a sales tax on recreational marijuana to the voters in November.