



THE FLASH City of Talent

An update from City Administration, Planning, Public Works and Police Departments

The Flash, which occupies the following two pages, is a publication of the City of Talent and is editorially separate from the rest of the Talent News and Review. All content and editorial choices contained in the rest of the paper are the sole responsibility of the TNR and are not in any way associated with the City of Talent. -JG

TREE CITY USA TREE PLANTING CEREMONY



On April 14th Oregon Department of Forestry presented Mayor Steyskal with a plaque during a tree planting ceremony held at Talent Middle School to honor Talent being named Tree City USA for 2008. Principal Curt Shenk, staff and students were on hand to help plant the tree in honor of our cities award. Thanks to everyone who attended! We're looking forward to hopefully being named Tree City USA again next year!

2009-2010 City's Budget Message from City Manager

"The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails" – William Arthur Ward

The nation is facing trying times. Our current fiscal emergency is impacting everyone from the individual citizen to the State to the Federal Government. The City of Talent is caught in the middle, as are many other municipalities. In my daily news alerts I hear of one city after another that is caught in a dire budget crisis (some even forced into bankruptcy). We are taking proactive steps to insure that we do not end up there. Our budget remains balanced and we are able to meet our legal obligations while continuing to provide critical services.

The challenges to providing a balanced, long-term fiscal policy range from tax limitations that do not allow revenues to keep pace with inflation-impacted expenditures, to mandates from the federal and state government that do not consider the substantial costs that they are forcing on local governments, to skyrocketing costs of providing benefits for city employ-

ees. At the same time, our citizens have every right to expect that a competent and professional police officer will show up when they need one; that clean water will flow when they turn on the tap; and that our land use codes will safeguard the livability of their homes while planning for inevitable growth.

So what's the plan? Almost every crisis also brings opportunity, and we are aggressively pursuing stimulus funding. Our budget is balanced, but very ambitious, with little room for cost overruns. We are going to depend on our excellent staff to constantly monitor expenditures and to be mindful every day of any opportunities to cut costs. I have asked the department heads to keep their spending at or below last year's level even though costs have increased (for example, we just received notice from the Medford Water Commission that the price of our drinking water will be increasing 12%). In addition, we have made agonizing personnel cuts in our small family of staff in Community Development, Administration, Code Enforcement, Public Works and Police Departments.

What are we not cutting? Very little. Barring unforeseen negotiating hurdles, I am not planning to request that the Union forego its stipulated 2% Cost Of Living Allowance per the contract and normal step increases will continue if individual performance merits them. Our remaining employees are being asked to do more and more for the city and they are being held to a very high standard of performance. They are excellent assets to the city and they work very hard to represent Talent professionally. Training has not been drastically cut and we have slightly increased our Information Technology budget. Sworn Police Officer staffing is as low as it can be and still provide adequate service.

What are our strengths to continue to build on? We have the finest City Council that I have ever worked with - they care deeply for the city, and show great intelligence, leadership, common-sense and ethics in their decisions. Our staff is outstanding and works extremely well together. I see continual improvement in Talent's sense of community and community pride. Even with our current fiscal situation, the city is still making projects happen and is moving forward. Talent is a wonderful, welcoming and exciting city- On behalf of the entire staff, thank you for the opportunity to serve.

"I walk slowly, but I never walk backward." – Abraham Lincoln

COP TALK

by Chief Moran

Oregon Attorney General John Kroger, who was a recent guest at the Talent PD, discussed important topics during a visit; two that I'd like to share. He met with local members of law enforcement to discuss police related issues in our Chuck Roberts Briefing Room.

One aspect of the harsh economic conditions in our country is the need for services provided by charitable organizations. At the same time charitable groups have to raise more funds to provide their programs.

Sadly, this is also a time when unscrupulous persons prey upon the goodwill of people and solicit funds from you under suspicious and even illegal circumstances.

Attorney General Kroger offers some advice on making your charitable contributions. Follow these practices for smart-giving:

- Resist the urge to donate impulsively to callers identifying themselves as local police or firefighters. Call the local organization mentioned by the telemarketer and verify the claims.
- Be careful about pledges a caller claims you made but you don't remember. If you have doubts, check your records.
- Do not succumb to pressure. No legitimate organization will insist that you contribute immediately.
- Be careful not to give personal information such as your social security number or mother's maiden name to anyone soliciting over the telephone.

Another topic of discussion was Talent Police officers' efforts over the past year to reduce young people's access to alcohol. Citations for Minor In possession of Alcohol have been issued to several under-age drinkers. But there are criminal charges that adults may face if they provide the alcohol to minors. The most common is furnishing alcohol to minors. That is when anyone provides alcohol to an under-age person. There are exceptions for parents in their own homes allowing their children to have alcohol. But generally these violations are people approached by teens to buy alcohol for them. Please do not provide alcohol to underage people as there are many negative consequences for all involved.

Public Works Water Department



Welcome citizens. Currently the Water Dept. is starting the annual water valve maintenance program. This program involves a two to three man crew, a service truck, and vacuum trailer. The crewmen acquire a Comprehensive Water Map of the City's Water Distribution System. This information tells the operator where the water valves are located and the size of each valve. The operator will actually vacuum the debris out of the valve box and then exercise the water valve.

One of the most frequently asked questions is why the City performs water valve maintenance. The answer is to insure that the valve is in the open position, that it actually works, and most importantly, that the City can count on it when needed. Every water system has valves - devices that regulate, stop, or start the flow of water in the distribution lines. Being able to operate these valves at a moment's notice is extremely important. In an emergency, sections of a distribution system may need to be shut

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down without delay. However, if a valve is not used over a period of time it can seize-up from corrosion and get stuck, making the valve inoperable. This maintenance procedure is one of the most important ones that we perform. The American Water Works Association recommends that water system valves be exercised annually. When the crew finds a water valve that is in need of repair, we schedule it as a priority. The City of Talent Water Distribution System has well over 400 water valves.

In addition to the water valve maintenance, the City of Talent performs tests on the water supply to ensure compliance from DHS and the EPA. City of Talent publishes the results each year and they are available to all residents. This report can be read online by clicking Water Quality Report 2008. After June 30 2008, the Talent water report will also be available at City Hall, located at 110 East Main Street.

Feedback and Question from the citizens of our town are welcomed. Please feel free to contact Lester Naught, Superintendent of Public Works 535-3828.

Mayor's New Office Hours at City Hall

Most recently, Mayor Don Steyskal has been a regular fixture at City Hall. He is now keeping regular office hours on Tuesdays between 11:30am and 1:30 pm.

Please feel free to contact Mayor Steyskal if you'd like to set up an appointment during this time. He can be reached by either calling 535-1566 or emailing him at Mayor@cityoftalent.org.

COMMITTEE/ COMMISSION VACANCIES

There is currently one vacancy on the Talent Planning Commission that needs to be filled as soon as possible and two vacancies on the Planning Commission Advisory Board. The Planning Commission meets once a month on the 4th Thursday in the evening at 6:30 p.m. at the Community Center. Their responsibilities include long term planning for the community as well as reviewing land use applications. The review process to be applied is defined in the City Comprehensive Plan, Zoning and Land Division Codes and State law. For more information, you can go to the planning department link on the cities website www.cityoftalent.org. Application forms to apply for the Planning Commission can be found on the City's website or obtained at City Hall. If you have more questions on the role of a Commissioner you can contact the City Planner, Mark Knox at 535-7041.

The City is looking for (2) two new members for the Architectural Review Committee. The Committee reviews all architectural applications; architectural design plans for new buildings in the city or restoration of remodeled buildings within the Old Town Design Review District. The regular meeting of the Committee is the 3rd Tuesday of the month, 6:00 p.m. at Community Hall. Application for positions are on the City's website www.cityoftalent.org or at City Hall.

Water Consumption Awareness

We are now coming into the season when more water is consumed due to gardens and outdoor activities. Citizens are reminded to be conscious of water usage since the amount you use determines the size of the bill. Just a small drip from a faucet or leaky toilet can result in a large water bill. If you'd like more information or water saving tips or you can contact the Utility Billing Department at City Hall 535-1566.

How to Report Street Light Outage

Street light maintenance should be simple – and it is with the helpful on-line forms provided by Pacific Power that allow you to be able to report an outage.

If you notice a standard pacific power streetlight is out of power, you can visit their Web site and fill out a simple form to let them know. www.pacificpower.net/streetlights or call 888/221-7070.

Their Web site also includes helpful safety tips and other useful information.

To report outages for decorative street lights downtown, please call Public Works at 535-3828

TALENT AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS



The Talent Avenue Improvement project is finally wrapping up and looking good. The final lifts of paving where put down on the 23rd and striping will occur towards the end of the month. The City of Talent appreciates the resident's patience during the construction of this project. Weather created a long delay in the completion of the project and left an undesirable street surface through the winter. Now that it is complete we can all enjoy the new road.

The Northern end of Talent Avenue will be under construction this summer. The plans are currently out to bid and the City anticipates construction of this project to start in early summer 2009.

Calling All Artists Contest



Submit your artwork for a chance to have it printed on the Tote Bag for the 2009 **Talent Harvest Festival**.
(Festival date is Saturday, September 12, 2009)

The prize is \$50.00 worth of gift certificates to local businesses and restaurants. One lucky artist will be selected. The theme is "Harvest and Music." Artwork only, do not include any words or dates. 12x17" desired max size of paper or canvas, 8-1/2x11" minimum size (4 color max)

Each entry will need to be accompanied by a signed artwork entry form. Forms are available online at www.cityoftalent.org or at the counter at City Hall, 110 E. Main, Talent.

Contact Cheryl at 535-1566 for more details on your submission.

Deadline is May 29th

**Mail Artwork and Form to: City of Talent Attn: Cheryl, P.O. Box 445
Talent, OR 97540**